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# CALVINISM

# Contrary to God's Word

AND

# MAN'S MORAL NATURE.

BY

D. FISK HARRIS.

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*"It is too frequent a custom of many readers to applaud or censure a book very highly, according to the opinion it favors, not according to the reason or argument it produces. If the opinion be agreeable to the sentiments and language of any particular party which the reader has chosen, the arguments, though ever so common or trifling, are pronounced strong and cogent. On the other hand, if the opinion happen to be near akin to those of a contrary sect, then the arguments brought to support it are all trifling. The author is a heretic, and therefore his reasonings must needs be all weak and insufficient if not, dangerous and destructive."*—ISAAC WATTS.

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# PREFACE.

The title of this work sufficiently explains the author's purpose. How far he has succeeded, the candid reader must judge.

Were it not for the conviction that each generation must examine for itself the foundations upon which its faith rests; that the times demand a reinvestigation of the cardinal principles of theology, and that he has something to say on these important themes, the author would not have obtruded himself upon the attention of the public.

A few words concerning the methods employed. Calvinism has been, and even now is, so variously interpreted, that it has been deemed necessary to devote not a few pages to its legitimate exposition. Knowing that it is easy to misrepresent an opponent by carelessly quoting his opinions, the author has verified the greater number of references. Where this was impossible he has taken them from reliable sources.

The arguments against Calvinism are cumulative. While each chapter combats a specific fallacy or unscriptural position, the reader is requested to waive his decision for or against the work until he has fairly considered the aggregated results.

The work is necessarily polemical. Yet the author joyously remembers the holy character and unceasing Christian activities of his theological opponents. He would say in the words of John Wesley, "Though we can not think alike, may we not love alike? May we not be of one heart, though we are not of one opinion?"

*Harmar, Ohio.*

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# PART I.

## WHAT IS CALVINISM?

"It can not be said that the slightest departure from the statements of Calvin is an abandonment of Calvinism. And yet there are some principles so distinctive, that if they be given up the system is abandoned."—*Alvan Tobey.*

# PART I.

## What is Calvinism?

Among the friends of Calvinism two views extensively prevail. The first regards the system as considerably modified since the sixteenth century; hence, any harsh statement made by an opponent is characterized as a misrepresentation. Possibly such things were once taught, but are not now, and therefore, they should not be designated as Calvinism.

Again, it is constantly affirmed by others equally friendly, that Calvinism has not changed; that its distinctive doctrines are taught now, as formerly, at the seminary and in the pulpit.

Here, it would seem is conflicting testimony; yet, possibly both parties are right. It is quite suggestive that the first position is more generally held by laymen, who, somewhat conscious of the repulsive features of Calvinism, desire to commend its doctrines.

The other view extensively prevails among ministers and theologians; hence, the divergence may be explained on the supposition that while the theology is held in its substantial integrity at the seminaries, and by all, or nearly all ministers at their ordination, yet as it is heard by the people, as it is preached by the majority of pastors, its most objectionable features have been greatly modified so as to mean almost nothing, or so explained as to teach Arminianism.

The present discussion in the Presbyterian church concerning the revision of the Westminster Confession has already clearly revealed the existence of these conflicting opinions.[1]

The following exposition of Calvinism by its ablest defenders is worthy the reader's careful attention.

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[1] At a special meeting of the Presbytery of New York, Nov. 4, 1889, Dr. Schaff read a paper on Revision of the Westminster Confession. During the reading he asked the brethren present if any of them ever preached on the decree of reprobation to manifest it by rising. No one rose.—*Magazine of Christian Literature, Jan., 1890, p. 204.*

## CHAPTER I.

### Calvinism and Augustinianism the Same in Their Essential Characteristics.

"Our fathers had much discussion over the doctrine of decrees; and, indeed, it is a wonder that we do not have more, for whoever looks into the mighty themes of a theodicy must regard election, decrees, foreordination, freewill, fate, these matters concerning which the angels debated in Milton's 'Paradise Lost,' as really supreme topics of philosophy as well as of religious science."—*Joseph Cook.*

## CHAPTER I.

### Calvinism and Augustinianism the Same in their Essential Characteristics.

"Much of Calvin's theology is common to him with all evangelical divines, and in the parts which are more peculiar to him and his school he follows closely in the steps of Augustine." [1]

In an article on "The Position of Calvinism," Rev. Robert Aikman, D. D., uses the following language: "It will be in order just here to state what is the Augustinian theology, or Calvinism, which is the same thing." [2]

Says Dr. Charles Hodge, "Such is the great scheme of doctrine known in history as the Pauline, Augustinian, or Calvinistic, taught as we believe, in the Scriptures." [3]

On the other hand, both Lutherans and Calvinists, following the example of Augustine, rejected the notion of the freedom of the will, and denied every co-operation on the part of man. Nevertheless it is a striking fact that the Lutherans avoided the strict consequences of the Augustinian system and asserted that the decrees of God are conditional, while the Calvinists not only admitted the necessity of those consequences, but having once determined the idea of

1 W. L. Alexander, D.D., "Encyclopædia Brit."
2 "Meth. Review," 1873, p. 301.
3 "Systematic Theol.," Vol. II., p. 333.

predestination, went so far as to maintain that the fall of man itself was predestinated by God." [1]

Professor George P. Fisher, D. D., says: "The particulars in which Calvin varied from Augustine are these, Augustine made the fall of Adam, the first sin, the object of a permissive decree. Calvin was not satisfied with a bare passive permission on the part of God, and makes statements which tend to the supralapsarian idea. This view was developed by Beza and a section of the Calvinists. But infralapsarian or Augustinian Calvinism has had the suffrages of a majority. It is found in the Westminster Confession, and even the creed of the Synod of Dort does not go beyond it. Augustine held to the præterition, instead of the reprobation of the wicked; or rather to their reprobation, not to sin, but to the punishment of sin. . . . . High Calvinists held to a positive decree of reprobation, analogous to that of election; yet denied that God is the author of sin. Calvin differed from Augustine in holding to the perseverance of all believers; that is, that none but the elect ever exercise saving faith. Augustine attributed to the sacraments a greater effect on the non-elect. Thus he held that all baptized infants are saved. This sacramental tenet is often declared to be a feature of the Anglican system, as opposed to that of Calvin." [2]

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[1] Hagenbach's "History of Doctrine," Vol. II., p. 254.

[2] "History of the Reformation," p. 337, note.

## CHAPTER II.

### Are God's Decrees Conditioned on His Foreknowledge?

"The great Genevan Reformer with consistent intrepidity, was in truth, so far as doctrine is concerned, the highest of the high. Fearlessly pushing his principles to their full legitimate extent, he at once maintained, without any restriction or disguise, both the dogma of reprobation and the theory of supralapsarianism."—*G. S. Faber, D. D.*

## CHAPTER II.

### Are God's Decrees Conditioned on His Foreknowledge?

This is the crucial question concerning the doctrine of Divine decrees. The following pages will clearly disclose the fact that Calvinism has but one answer to the question.

"Augustine accounts for the fact that some men are renewed, and some are not, because of the unconditional decree (*decretum absolutum*). . . . . Its ground and reason is God's wise good pleasure, and not a foreseen faith upon the part of the individual man."[1]

The following is a concise and clear presentation of the doctrine as formulated by Gottschalk: "The peculiarity in the doctrine of Gottschalk consisted in this, that he applied the notion of predestination not merely, as was commonly done, to the pious and to salvation, but also to the reprobate and to everlasting punishment. He affirmed a *prædestinatio duplex*, by virtue of which God decreed eternal life to the elect, and the elect to eternal life, and so also everlasting punishment to the reprobate, and the reprobate to everlasting punishment. This doctrine seems to him important, because it enabled him to hold fast the unchangeableness of the divine decrees, and their entire independence of that which takes place in time.

[1] Dr. W. G. T. Shedd's "History of Doctrine," Vol. I., pp. 70, 71.

In reference to the works of God, foreknowledge and foreordination are one; his knowledge being one with his will, and this will creative."[1] . . . . "Thomas Aquinas, in opposition to those who supposed a grace conditioned on the right use of freewill, and a predestination conditioned on the divine foreknowledge with regard to this right use, maintained that all this is already comprised among the effects of predestination and presupposed by it."[2]

Beza "adopted the supralapsarian statement of the doctrine of predestination which renders the doctrine more austere and repelling than the infralapsarian representation."[3] "The Second Helvetic Confession says, 'God, from eternity, predestinated or elected freely, and of his own mere grace, with no respect of men's character, the saints whom he would save in Christ.'"[4] "No one can deny but God foreknew Adam's fall, and foreknew it because he had ordained it so by his own decree."[5] "The decision of the Synod of Dort, condemnatory of the Arminian doctrines, was unanimous. . . . . In accordance with the acknowledged symbols of that church (the Reformed) the Synod decided. . . . . (2) 'That God out of the human race, fallen by their fault into sin and destruction, according to the most free good pleasure of his own will, and of mere grace, chose a certain number of men, neither better nor worthier than others. . . . to salvation in Christ.'"[6] "Although God knows

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[1] Neander's "Church History," Vol. III., p. 474.
[2] Ibid., Vol. IV., p. 478.
[3] Shedd's "History of Doctrine," Vol. II., p. 192.
[4] Ibid., p. 470, Chap. XXIII., Sec. 7.
[5] Calvin's "Inst.," Book III.
[6] Chas. Hodge. "Theology," Vol. II., p. 724.

whatsoever may or can come to pass, upon all supposed conditions; yet hath he not decreed anything because he foresaw it as future, or as that which would come to pass, upon such conditions. . . . . Those of mankind that are predestinated unto life, God, before the foundation of the world was laid, according to his eternal and immutable purpose, and the secret counsel and good pleasure of his will, hath chosen in Christ, unto everlasting glory, out of his mere free grace and love, without any foresight of faith or good works, or perseverance in either of them, or any other thing in the creature, as conditions, or causes moving him thereunto; and all to the praise of his glorious grace." [1]

"Others there are who have taught that God's electing of these and rejecting the other, dependeth wholly on the will of men themselves, and not on the decree or will of God: and that there is none rejected of God till by their own contempt, themselves do first reject God, and by their willful obstinacy refuse his grace which is offered unto them. How evidently do these men oppugn the Scriptures of God! For if election and rejection depend on the actions of men after they are born, how can it be true which the apostle teacheth, that we are elected before the foundation of the world?" [2]

"That he foreknew the futurity of it (the fall) is undeniable, for he laid in for a remedy against the evil effects of it, respecting his elect, having chosen them in Christ before the foundation of the world,

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[1] "Westminster Confession of Faith," pp. 26-28.

[2] "A Sermon on Predestination." Rev. Rich. Crakanthorp, D.D., London, 1623, pp. 10, 11.

(Eph. 1 : 4,) which foreknowledge could have no ground, but in his purpose, the thing being in itself contingent." [1]

Toplady says: "Those who are ordained unto eternal life were not so ordained on account of any worthiness foreseen in them, or of any good works to be wrought by them, not yet for their future faith, but purely and solely, of free sovereign grace, and according to the mere good pleasure of God." [2]

"God decreeth to give us His grace and be the chief cause of all our holiness; and doth not elect us to salvation on foresight that we will do his will, or be sanctified by ourselves without him. It is strange that any should think that God would undertake so great a work as man's redemption, and not effectually secure the success by his own will and wisdom: but leave all to the lubricous will of man." [3]

"The Calvinistic doctrine of predestination supposes that holiness of heart and life are as much the object of divine appointment as future happiness, and that this connection can never be broken." [4]

Speaking of the elect, Charnock says, "Nor could it be any foresight of works to be done in time by them, or of faith that might determine God to choose them." [5]

"When we say that God acts in an absolute and sovereign manner, the meaning is, that he acts upon the best and strongest reasons and for the noblest and most excellent ends: but which are, many or most of them beyond our reach and comprehension, and par-

1 Sam'l Willard, "Complete Body of Divinity," 1726, p. 178.
2 "Works," London, 1857, p. 694.
3 The Genius, Works, and Times, of Baxter," 1845, Vol. I., p. 45.
4 A. Fuller's "Works." Bohn's Lib'y, p. 364.
5 "Attributes of God," London, 1842, p. 662.

ticularly, that there is not the least foundation for supposing that the reasons of preference are taken from comparative human merit."[1]

"St. Paul exhibits this subject in a happier manner: 'Whom he foreknew,' says the apostle, 'he also predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son.' By this declaration, we are not to understand that the predestination spoken of followed the foreknowledge, any more than that the foreknowledge followed the predestination. The Apostle says: 'Whom he foreknew,' not after he had foreknown them."[2]

"Those who would account for the foreknowledge of God without his decrees, have always found the subject dark and incomprehensible. But there is nothing dark, unintelligible or incomprehensible in the foreknowledge of God as founded on his decrees. If God formed all his purposes from eternity, he must necessarily have known all things from the beginning of the world. For if the foreknowledge of God be not founded upon his decrees, it has no foundation: it is an effect without a cause."[3]

Says Dr. Samuel Hopkins: "Foreknowledge is not only to be distinguished from the decree, but must be considered, as, in the order of nature, consequent upon the determination and purpose of God; and dependeth upon it. For the futurition or futurity of all things depends upon the decrees of God. By these, every created existence and every event, with all their circumstances, are fixed and made certain; and in

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1 Dr. Witherspoon. "Works." Vol. I., p. 189.
2 Dr. Timothy Dwight. "Works." Vol. I., p. 240.
3 Dr. N. Emmons. "Works." Ide's Ed., Vol. II., pp. 326, 327.

consequence of their being thus decreed, they are the objects of foreknowledge." [4]

Says Dr. E. D. Griffin, "Faith (the condition of salvation) and holiness generally, instead of being independent acts of the creature under the persuasions of the Spirit, are the gift of God. . . . . The choice of the elect was made, not in view of the foreseen operations of the determining power, but by the sovereign will of God decreeing to make them holy; and they are made holy in consequence of that decree." [5]

The following is from Dr. John Dick: "I remark once more that the decrees of God are absolute and unconditional. . . . . Here we have many opponents. Lutherans, Arminians, Jesuits; all, in a word, who have not adopted those views of the subject which are usually called Calvinistic. . . . . When he decreed to save those who should believe, he decreed to give them faith. . . . . That any decree is conditional in the sense of our opponents, that it depends upon the will of man, of which he is sovereign, so that he may will or not will as he pleases—we deny" [6] Says Dr. John Howe, "Lastly, it is very evident, that as to communications of grace and favor, God doth dispense very differently: and therefore must be understood to intend so to do, and to have always intended it." [7] "Thus we think, that the decree and the foreknowledge of God are inseparably connected together: and that, according to human conceptions, the decree, in point of order, must precede foreknowledge. The

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4 "Works," Vol. I., p. 70.

5 "The Doctrine of Divine Efficiency," pp. 127-145.

6 "Lectures," New York, 1856, p. 357.

"Works," London, 1862, p. 1139.

reverse of all this is the doctrine of the Arminians. They say that the foreknowledge of God is the ground of his decree." [8]

"But although God was not moved in the election of his people by the foresight of their faith or good works, but chose them out of his mere love; I remark (3) In his sovereign and gracious purpose of election all the means that are necessary to their salvation are included or were provided for." [9] "But why was this salvation confined to a certain favored number called the elect? This doctrine of the sovereignty of divine grace, has from the beginning been offensive to human reason. The selection of men and not of angels, as the object of redemption, can be borne with; but that, out of the same mass some should be taken, confessedly no better than others by nature; and that many should be reprobated or left, no worse than those elected, has ever been a stumbling block to multitudes." [1]

"'Tis true, many who are too proud to be indebted for their eternal salvation to the free favor of God, insist that the election by which he distinguishes sinners from sinners, is grounded upon good disposition; upon faith and holiness foreseen in the objects of that election. But if men be allowed to interpolate divine revelation and to add to the oracles of Jehovah the figments of their own invention, we may lay aside our Bibles." [2]

"With respect to the doctrine of election, I would

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8 Dr. Ashbel Green. "Lectures on the Shorter Catechism," p. 178.

9 Dr. G. W. Musgrave. "Tracts on the Doctrines, Order and Polity of Presbyterian Church," Vol. III., p. 205.

1 Dr. A. Alexander. "Compend. of Bible Truth," p. 101.

2 Dr. J. M. Mason. "Complete Works," 1849, Vol. III., p. 405.

state it in Scripture terms, and obviate the Antinomian interpretation, by remarking that man, as man, is said to be chosen to obedience, to be conformed to the image of his Son, etc., and not on a foresight of his faith or obedience; as also that the distinction between true believers and others is often expressly ascribed to God."[3] "Election is the choice of certain persons by God, from all eternity, to grace and glory. The reason why men are elected is not because Christ has shed his blood for them, redeemed and saved them; but Christ has done all this for them, because they are elected. It is wholly owing to the will and pleasure of God, and not to the faith, holiness, obedience and good works of men; nor to a foresight of all or any of these. It is absolute and unconditional, irrespective of anything in man as the cause and condition of it."[4] "The decrees of God are to be distinguished from his prescience or foreknowledge. Foreknowledge and decrees are intimately connected, but not identical. . . . . Foreknowledge is conditioned on, or founded in decrees."[5]

"This relation of God's knowledge and foreknowledge to his purpose is important to a just conception of his sovereignty. God could not foreknow an event which was dependent on his positive or permissive will until he had purposed to accomplish or permit it."[6]

Speaking of the views of Dr. N. W. Taylor and President Finney, Rev. Jas. Wood, D. D. says, "They

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3 Robt. Hall. "Works," Vol. III., p. 231.

4 Dr. John Gill, Quoted by Dan'l T. Fiske in "Bib. Sacra," Vol. XIV., p. 359.

5 Article by Dan'l T. Fiske. "Bib. Sacra." Vol. XIX, pp. 403, 413.

6 E. A. Lawrence. "Bib. Sacra," Vol. XX., p. 340.

involve the denial of divine decrees; for if God does not possess such absolute control over his creatures that he can govern them according to his pleasure, how could he have decreed anything unconditionally concerning them, since it might happen, that in the exercise of their free agency, they would act contrary to the divine purpose? On the same principle, they virtually reject the Calvinistic doctrine of election and make election depend upon the foreknowledge of God, and the will of the creature." [7]

"You will observe that the Confession only says that he did not decree anything because he foresaw it; that is, his foreknowledge is not the ground or cause of his decrees. Still they are inseparably connected. His decrees are not dependent upon his foreknowledge, nor identical with it; but his foreknowledge is rather dependent upon his decrees, though perfectly distinct from them." [8]

"Speaking of the simple intelligence and determinate knowledge of the Deity, Robt. J. Breckenridge, D. D., LL.D., remarks, "By the latter, which involves the divine will, God knows from eternity all things that would actually exist in the system of the universe. This is called foreknowledge. God, as we have shown, knows all possible things whether considered separately or in systems; hence he knows all things that are possible under all possible systems. And all things that will be actual, he knows as being determined by his will." [9]

"Again, if election were according to faith and

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[7] "Old and New Theology," p. 31.

[8] Wm. D. Smith. "What is Calvinism?" p. 39.

[9] The Knowledge of God, Objectively Considered," 1858, p. 277.

works foreseen, there would be no difficulty in answering the question, why God chooses one and not another? It would be because God foresaw that the former would believe and that the latter would remain in unbelief: yet we nowhere read of this in Paul, nor in the other sacred writers; on the contrary it is expressly declared that it is not of him that willeth." [1]

"New-school Presbyterians do not affirm that faith foreseen is the condition with God for his decree of election, much less any good works." [2] "With regard to unconditional election, it must be wholly without foreseen merit in the creature. This is the perfection of grace, that God seeks his creatures and they do not seek him. *Nullum elegit dignum; nullum tamen punit indignum.* This we can not modify; this stands essential to the doctrine. We pass into another system if we cross the line which separates the two problems." [3]

"On the most obvious principles of reason, therefore, the divine foreknowledge of events must have been founded on the divine will in framing the universal structure of things and impressing upon them respectively the laws of their action." [4]

"It is not true that he first knows who will repent, and then determines to give them repentance. He knows men will not repent, unless by his Spirit, he gives them repentance." [5]

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1 Pictet's "Theology." Reyroux's Translation. Presby. Board, pp. 204, 205.

2 Geo. Duffield, D. D. "Bib. Sacra," Vol. XX., p. 632.

3 Leonard Withington, D. D. "Bib. Sacra," Vol. XXI., p. 792.

4 Samuel S. Smith, D. D., LL.D. "Natural and Revealed Religion," 1816, pp. 259-260.

5 Leonard Woods, D. D. "Works." Vol. I., p. 511.

Says Dr. Venema: "The act of the decree is absolute; not uncertain or doubtful. It is not suspended on any condition on the part of man." [6]

Commenting on Rom. ix. 11, Dr. Albert Barnes says: "It was not because they had formed a character and manifested qualities which made this distinction proper. It was laid back of any such character and therefore had its foundation in the purpose or plan of God." [1]

"The idea that God elected some because he foresaw that they would repent is not sustained when we consider that God could not foresee anything which was not certain; and that nothing but God's decree makes it certain." [2]

"Holy practice is not the ground and reason of election, as is supposed by the Arminians, who imagine that God elects men to everlasting life upon a foresight of their good works: but it is the aim and end of election. God does not elect men because he foresees that they will be holy, but that he may make them, and that they may be holy." [3]

"Our opponents would have it, that all whom he foreknew would be penitent, or virtuous, or obedient, them He did predestinate to eternal life—thus subordinating the decrees of God to the doings of men. But unfortunately for their view, the predestination here is a predestination in the first instance to the character of saints, ere they should be translated to the glory of the inheritance of saints, so as very clearly

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6 "Institutes of Theology," 1853, p. 289.

1 "Commentary."

2 Nehemiah Adams, D. D. "Evenings With The Doctrines," p. 256.

3 Pres. Edwards. "Christian Love," p. 321.

to subordinate the doings and the moral state of men to the preordination of God." [4]

Controverting the views of Professor John Forbes, D. D., LL.D., of Edinburgh, Dr. Lyman H. Atwater in "The Presbyterian Quarterly and Princeton Review," remarks: "He frequently argues as if it were Supralapsarianism not to hold that the decree of election or reprobation is conditioned on a foresight of consent to, or stubborn rejection of, salvation in Christ. This latter doctrine, however, is not Supralapsarianism, but simple Arminianism." [5]

"From the mass of fallen men God elected a number innumerable to eternal life, and left the rest of mankind to the just recompense of their sins. That the ground of this election is not the foresight of anything in the one class to distinguish them favorably from the members of the other class, but the good pleasure of God." [6]

The following is from "Outlines of Theology," by Dr. A. A. Hodge: "The truth is that God, eternally and unchangeably, by one comprehensive act of will, willed all that happened to Adam from beginning to end in the precise order and succession in which each event occurred. God's will is suspended upon no condition, but he eternally wills the event as suspended upon its condition, and its condition as determining the event. . . . . Calvinists admit that the all comprehensive decree of God determines all events according to their inherent nature, the actions of free agents as free, and the operations of necessary causes, neces-

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[4] Dr. T. Chalmers. "Inst. of Theology, Vol. II., p. 390.

[5] 1873, p. 165.

[6] Dr. Chas. Hodge "Systematic Theology," Vol. II., p. 333.

sary. It also comprehends the whole system of causes and effects of every kind ; of the motives and conditions of free actions as well as the necessary causes of necessary events. God decreed salvation upon the condition of faith, yet in the very same act he decreed the faith of those persons whose salvation he has determined." Again, " They are sovereign in the sense that while they determine absolutely whatever occurs without God, their whole reason and motive is within the divine nature, and they are neither suggested nor occasioned by nor conditioned upon anything whatsoever without him." [7]

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[7] Pages 118, 119, 167, 166

## CHAPTER III.

### Is God Able to Prevent Sin?

"Men persist in regarding sin, and especially their own sin, as a trivial matter, and excuse it, and palliate it, and construct philosophical systems representing it as on the whole for the best. But apart from human philosophy and speculation, and that perverted theological teaching which makes 'sin the necessary means of the greatest good'; apart also, from the schemes of infidel men, to accommodate matters to their own wicked conduct, and so to arrange the administration of the Almighty, that they can live prayerless and godless lives here, and yet come out safe in the end apart from such things, there is no countenance given either from reason, or revelation, or the workings of God's providence in the world, or from any source whatever, to the idea, that God has any other views or feelings about sin than those of unmitigated loathing, and an infinite preference that no one of his moral creatures should ever have committed it."—"*Law and Penalty Endless.*"

## CHAPTER III.

### Is God Able to Prevent Sin?

"Augustine teaches that God ordains sin, but does not produce it." [1]

The following is from Calvin: "The will of God is the supreme and first cause of things. . . . . He does not remain an idle spectator, determining to permit anything; there is an intervention of an actual volition, if I may be allowed the expression, which otherwise could never be considered a cause." [2]

Speaking of Adam's relation to God, John Howe says: "He did not purpose to confirm him at first in that good state wherein he made him, so as to make it impossible for him to fall: for we find he did fall, and is in a lapsed state: therefore it was purposed that his fall should not be prevented, that it should not be hindered." [3]

"The permission of the fall doth not reflect on the divine purity. . . . . God is an omnipotent good, and it is his peculiar glory to bring good out of evil, that by the opposition and lustre of contraries his goodness might be the more conspicuous. . . . . Now the evil of sin God permitted as a fit occasion for the more glorious discovery of his attributes, in sending his Son

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1 Shedd's "History of Doctrine," Vol. I., p. 85.
2 "Institutes." B. I., Chap. XVI.
3 "Works." London, 1862, p. 1135.

into the world to repair his image which was defaced, and to raise man from an earthly to celestial happiness."[4]

"He can so permit sin as that it should infallibly be, and yet not so affect it as that it shall be any stain to his holiness in the least. As the sun is not defiled by shining upon the most dirty, stinking places, though they stink the more for its shining upon them; so God is then most holy when he is giving of men up to sin. He can so order it that Absalom shall commit the most horrid abomination, without being a blamable cause of it. He can harden Pharaoh's heart and yet very justly punish him for that hardness of his." [5]

"So God by his absolute power, might have prevented the sin of the fallen angels, and so have preserved them in their first habitation. . . . . Sin, in itself is a disorder, and therefore God doth not permit sin for itself; for in its own nature it hath nothing of amiableness, but he wills it for some righteous end, which belongs to the manifestation of his glory, which is his aim in all the acts of his will. . . . . God willed sin, that is, he willed to permit it, that he might communicate himself to the creature in the most excellent manner." [6]

"Having, in his infinite but incomprehensible wisdom and righteousness, permitted the fall and apostacy of man, he looked upon the whole human species as deserving of destruction and meet for it." [7]

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4 Wm. Bates. "The Harmony of the Divine Attributes." Presby. Board, pp. 50, 51, 52.

5 Sam'l Willard. "Complete Body of Divinity," Boston, 1726, p. 134.

6 Charnock. "Attributes of God," London, 1842, pp. 401, 345, 347.

7 Scott's "Comprehensive Commentary," p. 215.

"God was either willing that Adam should fall, or unwilling, or indifferent about it. If God was unwilling that Adam should transgress how came it to pass that he did? Is man stronger, and is Satan wiser than he that made them? Surely no. Again: could not God, had it so pleased him, have hindered the tempter's access to paradise? or have created man as he did the elect angels, with a will invariably determined to good only, and incapable of being biased to evil? Or at least have made the grace and strength, with which he indued Adam, actually effectual to the resisting of all solicitations to sin? None but Atheists would answer these questions in the negative. Surely, if God had not willed the fall, he could, and no doubt would have prevented it: but he did not prevent it: ergo, he willed it. And if he willed it, he certainly decreed it: for the decree of God is nothing else but the seal and ratification of his will."[8] "Our first parents, being seduced by the subtilty and temptation of Satan, sinned in eating the forbidden fruit. This their sin God was pleased, according to his wise and holy counsel, to permit, having purposed to order it to his own glory."[9] Speaking of President Edwards' theology, President Noah Porter says, "The existence of moral evil, in consistency with the divine perfections, is explained by the principles announced in the Treatise on the Will, viz.: that the Divine Being is not the author of sin, but only disposes things in such a manner that sin will certainly ensue. If this certainty is not inconsistent with human liberty, then it is not inconsistent with this liberty that God

[8] Toplady's "Works." London, 1857, p. 691.
[9] "Westminster Confession of Faith," p. 42.

should be the cause of this certainty, and in that sense be the author of sin."[1] "All things, both beings and events, exist in exact accordance with the purposes, pleasure, or what is commonly called, The Decrees of God." . . . . God "does according to his will, independently and irresistibly. . . . . That God could not prevent the existence of sin can not be maintained."[2]

"I believe that God could have prevented sin, and would, had he not seen it a means of blessing the universe by filling it with his glory."[3]

"There can nothing take place under the care and government of an infinitely powerful, wise and good Being that is not on the whole wisest and best; that is, for the general good; therefore, though there be things which are in themselves evil, even in their own nature and tendency, such are sin and misery; yet, considered in their connection with the whole, and as they are necessary in the best system to accomplish the greatest good, the most important and best ends; they are in this view desirable good, and not evil. And in this view there is no absolute evil in the universe! There are evils in themselves considered, but considered as connected with the whole, they are not evil but good."[4]

"The first Cause of all things must have decreed all things. If God has not decreed, he has not caused all things. And if he has not caused all things what reason is there to believe that he has caused anything?

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1 Ueberweg's "History of Philosophy." Vol. II., p. 448.
2 T. Dwight's "Theology." Vol. I., pp. 238, 241, 253.
3 E. D. Griffin "The Doctrine of Divine Efficiency," p. 32.
4 Samuel Hopkins'. "Theology," Vol. I., p. 92.

. . . . His power is absolutely unlimited and irresistible." [5]

Speaking of moral evils, President Samuel Stanhope Smith says, "To say that they have been merely permitted, without any interference, or concern of Almighty God in the actions of men, is only attempting, by the illusion of a word, to throw the difficulty out of sight, not to solve it." [6]

Dr. Ashbel Green declares, "Evil he permits to take place, and efficaciously overrules it for good for the promotion of his glory." [7] In "Tracts on the Doctrines, Order and Polity of the Presbyterian Church" we have the following testimony: "The conclusion is, therefore, to our minds irresistible, that if God be infinitely wise, benevolent and powerful, and perfectly foreknew what beings and events would, on the whole, be best, he must have chosen and ordained that they should exist, or be permitted to occur; and that consequently everything that does actually come to pass in time, has been eternally and unchangeably foreordained; and is either the effect of the divine efficiency, or the result of his predetermined permission." [8]

In volume fifth of the same work we are told, "Our doctrine, then, is simply this. By positive and permissive decrees, God, in wisdom and in love, manages the affairs of the universe, directs and controls all things and all events, all creatures and all their actions. It must be so, for suppose an event to take

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5 Nathanael Emmons' "Works," 1860, Vol. II., pp. 343, 546.

6 "Natural and Revealed Religion," p. 269.

7 "Lectures on the Shorter Catechism," p. 177.

8 Vol. III., G. W. Musgrave, p. 199.

place without the divine permission, for example, then it must be either because God is not aware of it, or can not prevent it. If not aware of it, he can not be omniscient; if he can not prevent it, then he is not omnipotent; and then, of course, in the last cause 'there must be a power behind the throne greater than the throne itself' which thought would be frightful."[9] Dr. Bellamy taught: "The doctrine of the wisdom of God, in the permission of sin, supposes sin in itself, and in all its natural tendencies to be infinitely evil, infinitely contrary to the honor of God and the good of the system. For herein consists the wisdom of God in the affair, not in bringing good out of good, but in bringing infinite good out of infinite evil; and never suffering one sin to happen in all his dominions but which, notwithstanding its infinitely evil nature and tendency, infinite wisdom can and will overrule for greater good on the whole."[1] "The decrees of God relate to all future things without exception: Whatever is done in time was foreordained before the beginning of time. His purpose was concerned with everything, whether great or small, whether good or evil; although in reference to the latter it may be necessary to distinguish between appointment and permission."[2] "All things that happen, happen by the will of God, whether that will be permissive, directing or executive."[3] "Now, though sin is hateful to God, it constantly takes place in his government; and it is atheism to say he could not prevent it, for he is not

[9] Dan'l Baker, Tract XXI.

[1] As quoted with approval by Bennett Tyler, D. D., in "Lectures on Theology," 1859, p. 218.

[2] John Dick, "Lectures on Theology," 1856, p. 353.

[3] Venema. "Institutes of Theology," 1853, p. 271.

God if he can not govern the world. We must, therefore, conclude, he permits it for reasons unknown to us."[4] "It will not do for us to say absolutely that God could not have bestowed upon Adam strength adequate to his trial; all we can say is that this could not be done upon the principles of the precise trial then made."[5] Says Pictet, "Since nothing can happen contrary to the knowledge and will of God, we say that he permits evil, though he in no way approves of it."[6] Dr. A. Alexander says, "The reason, then, why sin was permitted to exist was, that God might have an opportunity of manifesting his own glory to all intelligent creatures more conspicuously, which is the great end of all his works and dispensations."[7] "The decrees of God are not merely his purpose to permit events to take place as they do. Some hold that, with regard to the existence of sin we can only affirm that the divine decrees extend to it in the sense that God determines to permit it, that is, not to prevent it. But this language does not seem to express the whole truth. God might, indeed, be said to decree the existence of whatever he could have prevented, but determined not to prevent. But the decrees of God are not mere negatives. They are purposes to do something and to do that which renders certain the existence of all events, sin included."[8] "God permitted the introduction of sin, not because he was unable to prevent it consistently with the

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4 Wm. D. Smith. "What is Calvinism?" p. 29.

5 Dr. Breckinridge. "The Knowledge of God, Objectively Considered," p. 494.

6 "Theology," Reyroux's Translation, p. 115.

7 "Compend. of Bible Truth," pp. 74, 75.

8 Dan'l T. Fiske. "Bib. Sacra," Vol. XIX., p. 404.

moral freedom of his creatures, but for wise and benevolent reasons, which he has not revealed." [9]

"The Old School have charged the New with believing that God could have prevented the existence of sin in the world, but not without destroying the freedom of the human will; and that sin is incidental to any moral system. To this the latter reply, that God permitted the entrance of sin, but not because he was unable to prevent it; but for wise and benevolent reasons which he hath not revealed." [1]

Speaking of the hardening effects of the divine dealings with the Egyptians and Canaanites, President Jeremiah Day remarks, "Will it be said, that God merely *permitted* their hearts to be hardened; or permitted them to harden their own hearts? If this be conceded, it must be still understood, that he had power to prevent this result. What sort of permission is a mere inability to prevent that which is permitted?" [2] "Our doctrine, then, concerning the first sin committed by man, and in which the human race was involved, is simply, that God for wise reasons decreed or purposed, first, to permit, and secondly, to overrule it for his glory." [3] "Whatever occurs, he, for wise reasons permits to occur. He can prevent whatever he sees fit to prevent. If, therefore, sin occurs, it was God's design that it should occur. If misery follows in the train of sin, such was God's purpose." [4]

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9 "The Auburn Declaration," 1837.

1 Geo. Duffield, D. D." Bib. Sacra, Vol. XX., pp. 630, 631.

2 "An Inquiry Respecting the Self-Determining Power of the Will," p. 192.

3 N. L. Rice, "God Sovereign and Man Free," p. 31.

4 Dr. Charles Hodge. "Systematic Theol." Vol. II., p. 332.

Says Dr. Leonard Woods, "Evil does exist. . . . It exists in a world formed by him who possesses infinite wisdom and power, and who, if he had chosen, could have formed and governed the world so as to exclude it."[5] "The admission of sin into the creation of an infinitely wise, powerful and holy God is a great mystery of which no explanation can be given. . . . The whole difficulty lies in the awful fact that sin exists. If God foresaw it and yet created the agent, and placed him in the very circumstances under which he did foresee the sin would be committed, then he did predetermine it. If he did not foresee it, or foreseeing it, could not prevent it, then he is not infinite in knowledge and in power, but is surprised and prevented by his creatures."[6]

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[5] "Works." Vol. I., p. 529.

[6] Dr. A. A. Hodge. "Outlines of Theology," p. 171.

## CHAPTER IV.

### Why Are the Finally Impenitent Lost? Is it Because God Can not Save Them?

"But how, it may be asked, when God is an omnipotent sovereign, can sin so come in and not implicate him in either his participation or neglect? We answer, according to our theory of Rectitude, by this general hypothesis, and yet, when clearly apprehended, we hardly deem it can be held merely as hypothesis, but as exact truth; that sin, in some form and extent, will be a certain result of God's dealings with his creatures according to what is due to himself. In other words, if God always deals with finite spirits according to principles of 'honor and right,' there will be sin. . . . . With a goodness infinitely higher than any craving of a benevolent susceptibility or prompting of nature for happiness, and of a wholly distinct kind, even in the broad sense of goodness that would have all that was worthy for Infinite Excellency to receive—he planned and executed the work of the sinner's redemption, and only fails of attaining universal salvation in it, from the perverse rejection of sinners, in whose behalf his own honor will not allow his power and grace to work any longer nor any further."—*L. P. Hickok, D. D., LL.D.*

## CHAPTER IV.

### Why Are the Finally Impenitent Lost? Is it Because God Can not Save Them?

"Thus, the Augustinian system with rigorous self-consistence formed itself as follows: All men before regeneration, and since Adam's fall, which corrupted human nature, both physically and morally, are in essentially one and the same state of alienation from God, of spiritual enmity towards him, and of condemnation by him. This state is one of self-will without the power to the contrary, and hence fallen man, as such, can do nothing but evil. He can be delivered from this state only by the grace of God, who imparts the principle of holiness and progressive sanctification through the medium of faith in Christ. This grace (as *gratia irresistibilis*) with internal and almighty power overcomes the utmost intensity of man's self-will and aversion, and the recipient of it is eternally saved."[1] "The wills of men are so governed by the will of God that they are carried on straight to the mark which he has foreordained."[2]

The Synod of Dort "held that regenerating as distinct from common grace is able to subdue all opposition of the sinful will, and therefore can not be resisted in the sense of being defeated or overcome."[3]

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1 Guericke's "Church History." Shedd's Translatation, p. 379.
2 Calvin's "Institutes." B. I., Chap. XVI. Sec. 8.
3 Shedd's "Hist. of Doctrine." Vol. II., p. 497.

"To all those for whom Christ hath purchased redemption, he doth certainly and effectually apply and communicate the same: Making intercession for them, and revealing unto them, in and by the word, the mysteries of salvation; effectually persuading them by his Spirit to believe and obey; and governing their hearts by his word and Spirit."[4] "Luther compared man to a saw, which is a passive instrument in the hands of the carpenter."[5]

"Wherefore, if God would not at all have the death and destruction of those vessels of wrath which are of old ordained to condemnation, as St. Luke speaketh, then certainly, though all the armies, both in heaven and earth should band together, yet could they not all effect the death of the meanest or weakest of them; for who is able to resist his will, who is Almighty? And who saith of himself, 'My counsel shall stand and I will do whatsoever I will.' Unless then we deny the first article of our faith, which is the Omnipotency of God, we must needs confess, that the death and damnation of those vessels of wrath cometh to pass by the will of the Almighty: for if he willed it not, he could, nay, he would have hindered it ten thousand ways."[6]

In a work entitled "A Defence of Some of the Important Doctrines of the Gospel," the following testimony is given: "If election is an absolute purpose of God to save any independent of any conditions to be performed by them which may render this purpose effectual to their salvation, then it must be unchange-

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4 Westminster Confession of Faith," p. 61.

5 Hagenbach's "Hist. of Doctrine." Vol. II., p. 258.

6 Richard Crakanthorp's "Sermon on Predestination."

able ; and if it is an unchangeable purpose of God to save, then all those whom he thus purposed to save, must necessarily and infallibly be saved. Nothing can hinder, prevent or disannul their salvation." [7] "We shall now inquire whether the grace of God, in the renewing of a sinner, may be frustrated, or set aside, by the opposition of the creature. And here we are to remember it is God's work, and therefore must be perfect, since he can and will do all his pleasure. To say that he can not, though he would, change the sinner's heart, by an immediate act of his own power, is to challenge his omnipotence. So that the question is not whether God can do this or no: but whether it is worthy of him, and how far it is really the case? . . . . If the soul is passive in the implanting the principle of grace, as we have endeavored to prove, then there can be no resistance in regeneration." [8]

Charnock, in speaking of the relation of God to sin, says, "If he did in no sort will it, it would not be committed by his creature: sin entered the world, either God willing the permission of it, or not willing the permission of it. The latter can not be said: for then the creature is more powerful than God, and can do that which God will not permit. God can, if he be pleased, banish all sin in a moment out of the world." [9] "God never designed to save every individual; since, if he had, every individual would and must be saved, for his counsel shall stand, and he will

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[7] John Sladen, p. 97.
[8] Sam'l Wilson, pp. 319, 320.
[9] "Attributes of God," p. 493.

do all his pleasure." [1] "Now, God's eternal election is the first ground of the bestowment of saving grace. And some have such saving grace, and others do not have it because some are from eternity chosen of God, and others are not chosen." [2]

Dr. Ashbel Green, in explaining the doctrine of reprobation says, "Or will you say that he gave equal grace to both; but the one improved it and the other did not? For the sake of the argument, let this for a moment be admitted. But then I ask could he not have given grace that certainly would have been effectual to him who remains without religion? You will not so limit God and his grace, as to say he could not. But he actually did not. He left the person in question without effectual grace. And here is all the doctrine of reprobation which we hold." [3] Dr. Nathanael Emmons says of God, "He decreed the existence, the character, the conduct and the state of all moral beings both in time and eternity. He decreed that some should be the monuments of his goodness, some the monuments of his justice; and some the monuments of his mercy. And he decreed all the means by which his rational creatures should be brought to their final and eternal condition. . . . . It is his secret will that all the elect shall repent and believe; and that all the non-elect shall live and die in impenitence and unbelief." [4] In the same spirit Dr. E. D. Griffin taught, . . . . "God has the absolute control of mind in all its common operations, else how could he govern the

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1 Toplady's "Works," p. 692.
2 Edwards' "Christian Love," p. 321.
3 "Lectures on the Shorter Catechism," p. 288.
4 "Works." Vol. II., pp. 333-346.

world? Whether he does this by the mere force of motives adapted to the existing temper, or sometimes by a lower sort of efficiency, not, however, productive of sin, I will not determine. But the fact is incontrovertible. . . . . Even in the motions of sin (though only permissively I suppose), his government is effectual."[5] The following is from Dr. John Dick: "The term predestination, includes the decrease of election and reprobation. Some, indeed, confine it to election; but there seems to be no sufficient reason for not extending it to the one as well as to the other; as in both the final condition of man is pre-appointed or predestinated. . . . . They (the non-elect) were appointed to wrath for their sins; but it was not for their sins as we have shown, but in the exercise of sovereignty, that they were rejected."[6]

Commenting on the passage "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee," Dr. Samuel Hopkins says, . . . . "God does superintend and direct with regard to every instance of sin. He orders how much sin there shall be, and effectually restrains and prevents all that which he would not have take place. Men are, with respect to this, absolutely under his direction and control."[7] "When any are lost, we do not hesitate to say that they perish by their own deserts, although God could have mercifully saved them had it pleased him."[8] "He carries on all beings to their end, and so rules them as that now misseth it. There is a peculiar subordinate end, and there is an

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5 "The Doctrine of Divine Efficiency," pp. 95, 98.
6 "Lectures on Theology," pp. 360, 373.
7 "Works." Vol. I., p. 98.
8 Pictet's "Theology," p. 213.

universal, general and last end : the creature may miss the former but not the latter." [9]

"So that if we admit that the works of God are known to him from the beginning of the world, it can never be true that in his eternal counsels, Christ died to save those, who after all that he hath done shall be miserable forever. 'He is a rock—his work is perfect.' His design never could be frustrated." [1] "God has purposed by a positive act of his will, not only to condemn unbelievers, but also to withhold from some sufficient grace, on which withholding, as we shall see, when we come to treat of the doctrine of reprobation, depends the final ruin of the impenitent. *Common* grace, of which even those who perish partake, consists in the offer of Christ, made in the Gospel, an offer which is intended by God to be made to all, and in which no one at least is excluded. But besides this common grace, there is particular and efficacious grace which is bestowed only on some, and which is so intimately connected with salvation that it begets faith in those to whom it is given, *i. e.*, the elect. This grace, as we shall afterwards show, is irresistible." [2] In the celebrated Auburn Declaration of 1837, which was a peace-offering from the New to the Old School Presbyterians, we are told : "While repentance for sin and faith in Christ are indispensable to salvation, all who are saved are indebted from first to last to the grace and spirit of God. And the reason that God does not save all is not that he wants the power to do it, but that in his wisdom he does not see fit to exert that

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9 Willard. "Complete Body of Divinity," p. 143.

1 John Witherspoon. "Works," Vol. I., p. 342.

2 Venema's "Institutes of Theology," pp. 297, 298, 299.

power further than he actually does. . . . . While all such as reject the gospel of Christ do it not by coercion but freely, and all who embrace it, do it not by coercion but freely, the reason why some differ from others is that God has made them to differ." [3]

The following from the "Princeton Essays," condemns Arminianism and gives the true Calvinistic doctrine. "These views of human agency are such, that God is virtually represented as unable to control the moral exercises of his creatures; that notwithstanding all that he can do they may yet act counter to his wishes, and sin on in despite of all the influence which he can exert over them consistently with their free agency. If this be not to emancipate the whole intelligent universe from the control of God and destroy all the foundations of our hopes in his promises we know not what it is. When sinners are thus represented as depending on themselves, God having done all he can, exhausted all his power in vain for their conversion—how they can be made to feel that they are in his hands, depending on his sovereign grace, we can not conceive." [4]

"Effectual calling is a work of God's infinite grace, executed by his Almighty power. . . . . The moving and original cause of our personal salvation, and so of our effectual calling of God is not at all nor in any degree anything in us; but is the free and especial love of God for his elect according to his eternal purpose and grace in Jesus Christ. . . . . In this work of divine renovation, man is wholly passive. . . . . I have said repeatedly that the absolute domin-

[3] As quoted by Geo. Duffield, D. D., in "Bib. Sacra," July, 1863.
[4] "Princeton Review," 1846, p. 303.

ion of God over man, and the absolute dependence of man on God, are the fundamental truths that control all the relations between God and man."[5] "If God could as easily have saved all as a part, why did he not manifest his goodness in doing so? To which it may be answered, that we do not know the reasons of the divine conduct in this matter. He, as an absolute Sovereign, has a right to do as seemeth good with his own."[6] Speaking of man's ignorance of, and his inability to grasp divine things, Professor B. B. Edwards says, "If he undertakes to examine the mode of operation in any of the works of God, he will be baffled at every step. His curiosity prompts him to do this, but his powers are incompetent. He has a strong desire to know the manner in which God works in the world of *mind*—how he controls free agents, while yet they are conscious of perfect freedom—why God elects some, in his mere sovereign pleasure unto everlasting life, why he did not long since communicate the blessings of salvation to the whole family of man."[7]

"In regeneration men are wholly passive; as they also are in the first moment of conversion, but by it become active. Regeneration is an irresistible act of God's grace; no more resistance can be made to it, than there could be by the first matter in its creation, or by a dead man in his resurrection."[8]

"The operations of the Spirit in regeneration are efficacious or invincible. By this I mean what the old

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[5] R. J. Breckenridge. "The Knowledge of God Subjectively Considered," pp. 132, 156, 55.

[6] Dr. A. Alexander. "Compend of Bible Truth," p. 102.

[7] "Writings," Vol. I., p. 283

[8] Alvan Tobey. "Bib. Sacra," Vol. XVIII., p. 382.

divines meant by irresistible grace. . . . . He who subdued the heart of the persecuting Saul, and who cast seven devils out of Mary Magdalene, can, if he please, make any sinner a trophy of his grace." [9]

"The whole matter, therefore, resolves itself into the two questions: 1. Can God exercise over men a particular providence so as to bring to pass his wise purposes, without destroying or impairing their free agency? 2. Can God exert upon the minds of men, providentially and by his Spirit, a Divine influence that will certainly lead them to Christ, and induce them to persevere in his service, without interfering with their liberty? These questions have already been answered. We have seen that the providence of God extends to all things and events, and that he can so govern even wicked men as to fulfill his purposes without interfering with their freedom of choice." [1]

Leaving a sinner to his own evil way is, according to Dr. Albert Barnes, . . . "an act of sovereignty on the part of God, . . . . and in not putting forth that influence by which he could be saved from death." Speaking of the passage "For there is no respect of persons with God," he says, "It does not imply that he may not bestow his favors where he pleases, where all are undeserving; or that he may not make a difference in the characters of men by his providence and by the agency of his Spirit." [2] Combating the Arminian doctrine that God saves all whom he can, Dr. Nehemiah Adams affirms "This can not be. We can not fully revere one whom we pity. We prefer to

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9 Bennett Tyler. "Lectures on Theology," p. 359.

1 N. L. Rice, D. D. "God Sovereign and Man Free," p. 83.

2 "Commentary" on Romans, pp. 197, 58.

place every man, angel and devil, with every holy and sinful act, and the eternal happiness or misery of every one of us in the hands of an infinitely wise and powerful God and pray that he would order everything with a view to the highest interest of his universal Kingdom." [3] For the following, we are indebted to Dr. Charles Hodge. It gives no uncertain sound. "If some men only are saved, while others perish, such must have entered into the all-comprehending purpose of God." Again, speaking of common grace and the non-elect, he says, "That while the Holy Spirit, in his common operations, is present with every man, so long as he lives, restraining evil and exciting good, his certainly efficacious and saving power is exercised only in behalf of the elect." [4]

Dr. A. A. Hodge says "It rests only with God himself to save all, many, few or none." He informs us that "Reprobation is the aspect which God's eternal decree presents in its relation to that portion of the human race which shall be finally condemned for their sins. It is first, negative, inasmuch as it consists in passing over these, and refusing to elect them to life; and second, positive, inasmuch as they are condemned to eternal misery. In respect to its negative element, reprobation is simply sovereign, since those passed over were no worse than those elected, and the simple reason both for the choosing and for the passing over, was the sovereign good pleasure of God." [5]

The reader is now in a position where he can read-

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[3] "Evenings with the Doctrines," p. 255.
[4] "Systematic Theology," Vol. II., pp. 332, 333.
[5] "Outlines of Theology," pp. 181, 184.

ily and intelligently judge of the true nature of Calvinism. All minor points in the system have been avoided because (1) They are logically involved in the preceding principles. Hence such doctrines as Original Sin, and Imputation, or the Federal Head-ship of Adam, are but means to an end; intermediate steps by which the unconditional sovereignty of God is made to appear less repulsive and more reasonable. Once grant that God can decree or has eternally decreed a man's destiny irrespective of divine foresight of what that person's character shall freely be, you have logically conceded all: the other doctrines simply explain how the result is reached. (2) Like other theological systems, Calvinism in its minor doctrines is variously interpreted. Prof. Henry B. Smith has said, "Calvinism, in its historical growth, has assumed a variety of forms. It has been prolific in systems." [6] Hence Old and New School Calvinism, while agreeing on God's sovereignty, differently explain such doctrines as Original Sin, Imputation and Ability. Thus Dr. Albert Barnes was tried for heresy because he did not accept among other doctrines the Old School view of Imputation.[7]

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[6] "Faith and Philosophy," p. 225.

[7] "To say that I am blameworthy, or ill deserving for a sin in which I had no agency, is no explanation, but is involving me in an additional difficulty still more perplexing to ascertain how such a doctrine can possibly be just." "Commentary." Rom., p. 122.

# PART II.

## CALVINISM CONTRARY TO GOD'S WORD.

"Let it be remembered as a very just and very important remark of Doddridge, that the plain sense of the Scriptures, or that which naturally strikes the minds of plain men as the real meaning is almost of course the true sense."—*Timothy Dwight, D. D.*

# PART II.

## CHAPTER I.

### Calvinism Teaches a Limited Atonement.

In a discussion where the Scriptures are the criterion, it is certainly appropriate to consider the leading principles of Biblical interpretation. Not a few in all ages have considered the Bible a book of contradictions. Almost every heresy in theology and many disorders in society have possessed advocates who have claimed protection from the Scriptures. Thus the crime of slavery was prolonged for centuries; the pretended revelations of Mormonism—that festering and contaminating sore on the body politic—have been, and are now accepted by not a few, because of their alleged agreement with the word of God.

Hence there are men that, perplexed by the many different theories and systems of thought; and not possessing sufficient time and skill to expose the sophisms, grow skeptical concerning the authority of the Bible, and like Pilate, cry despairingly "What is truth?"

But beyond all successful contradiction the Bible is God's revelation. It is for the instruction and guidance of the human race. A unity pervades its pages. It was meant to teach something: not anything and everything. While it contains "some things hard to

be understood," while it teaches mysteries which the human reason can not fathom, yet the underlying principles, the essentials of salvation are so clearly revealed that "the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein." Jesus Christ is "the true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world": consequently he affirmed concerning the unbelieving Jews, "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloke for their sin."

The Calvinist has been justly admired for his adherence to the divine Word. The spirit which prompts him to go to the Law and the Prophets to search the Scriptures for the reason of the hope which is within him is worthy of all emulation. While it is hoped the same spirit will animate the present discussion, the methods of interpretation adopted may be designated as follows: (1) The clearly revealed Scriptures are to have the pre-eminence; hence (2) The less clearly revealed Scriptures are to be interpreted by the former. (3) The context must be allowed its full weight; and (4) the Analogy of Faith, or general harmony of Scripture must be preserved.

## SECTION I.

### *Terms Defined. The Problem Stated.*

In this discussion the term atonement is used in its broadest sense. Objectively considered it refers to the vicarious sufferings of the Lord Jesus Christ as satisfying the divine law. Considered subjectively it refers to the results of Christ's [perfect life and] sacrificial death which may be called salvation or redemption

from sin. This salvation is possible, and actual even as it is, or is not appropriated by the individual. Says Dr. Samuel D. Cochran: "This substitutional, expiatory, righteous act of Christ, having this infinite value, is *provisional* for all human sinners, but made *actual* only for those who appropriate it by faith."[1] Hence the atonement objectively considered is the ground on which salvation is offered to all. By the vicarious sacrifice of Christ, God's veracity and justice are exalted, and his infinite hatred of sin, but boundless love for the sinner wondrously revealed. God's government is honored while at the same time his mercy is freely extended to all. But all men do not accept this mercy: therefore the question before us is, For whom did Christ die? For all men, or for a certain number called the "elect"? Was it the will of God that Christ should die for all in a certain sense—so that all may and do receive benefits therefrom, but only for the elect in a saving or efficacious sense? Or did he die for all men in the same sense? Calvinists answer these questions by saying: "Christ died meritoriously for all, efficaciously only for the elect." To this effect is the declaration of the Westminster Confession of Faith. "As God hath appointed the elect unto glory, so hath he by the eternal and most free purpose of his will, foreordained all the means thereunto. Wherefore they who are elected being fallen in Adam, are redeemed by Christ by his Spirit working in due season; are justified, adopted, sanctified, and kept by his power through faith unto salvation. Neither are any other redeemed by Christ, effectually

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1 "The Moral System and the Atonement," p. 245.

called, justified, adopted, sanctified and saved, but the elect only."[2]

The following is from Dr. Lyman Atwater. "All who know anything of the Westminster standards, know that they represent Christ as the 'Redeemer of God's elect,' and that they limit the redemptive efficacy of his death to his people."[3] "Our Saviour, likewise, in the course of his preaching, taught the doctrine of reprobation in plain and pointed terms. He told some of his obstinate hearers that he came into the world to save the elect, and destroy the non-elect."[4]

New England, or modern Calvinism differs from that of the Westminster symbol concerning the extent of the atonement. Dr. H. B. Smith says of Emmons: "He symbolized with the younger Edwards and Hopkins, and opposed the older Calvinism as to the extent of the atonement, proclaiming it to be universal in its provisions." To the Arminian, this is a distinction without any essential difference; for while the methods are diverse, the results reached by both systems of Calvinism are the same.

The old view conceives God as really inviting none but the elect, while according to the new school theology, the entire human race is urged to accept salvation. The latter certainly appears more reasonable: but as it is explained by new school advocates it is mere logomachy. Thus Dr. Barnes says of the tenth chapter of Romans, "In the closing part of this chapter the great doctrine is brought forth and defended,

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2 P. 29.

3 "Bib. Sacra," Vol. XXI., p. 116.

4 Emmons. "Works," Vol. II., p. 396.

that the way of salvation is open for all the world."[5] But how is the way of salvation open to all the world? In the sense that it was the purpose of God to save all whom the divine foresight saw would freely accept Jesus? By no means; for as we have seen, Dr. Barnes, with all consistent Calvinists, denies foresight as the ground or basis of election. Here are his words as he explained his position before the Philadelphia Synod: "I may safely challenge any man to point out the place in the whole book (the Confession of Faith) where it is affirmed that the work of Christ in its original applicability is necessarily confined to any number or class of men." Once more: "To the Redeemer's sufferings and death contemplated apart from the actual purpose to apply his merits, I chose, in accordance with many writers, to apply the word atonement. The actual application of his work, I supposed might be appropriately expressed by the word redemption. It was not thought that this was a departure from Scripture usage. The word atonement occurs but once, as applicable to the death of Christ in the New Testament: the word redemption often, and this latter word always with reference to the purpose to apply it. It did not seem then, to be a gross violation of the Scripture usage to describe by the word atonement a thing which may and must be contemplated the highest and best gift of God—the sufferer, the bleeding victim, the atoning sacrifice; still less can it be seen how this usage can be construed into an offense against the Confession of Faith. In all our standards of doctrine the word atonement never occurs. Nor is it the purpose of the standards to

[5] 1 Com.

describe the thing which I wished to express by the word, the original, independent applicability of the sufferings of Christ. The Confession of Faith states only its application. For that it uses the word redemption. It affirms of that, that it is limited and was intended to be limited. *That* the sermon never denied."[6] Certainly a most wonderful, and to the present discussion, valuable confession. It shows (1) Dr. Barnes' essential agreement with the Confession of Faith. (2) When he declares "that the way of salvation is open to all" he means that the atonement, the objective atonement is applicable to all; and as thus applicable to all is but once mentioned in the New Testament: and (3) That redemption which often occurs in the New Testament is limited—is meant to be limited to the elect.

The problem is now clearly before the reader. The Arminian declaring, and the Calvinist denying that so far as the death of Jesus Christ is concerned, it had an equal reference to every man, and thus is the basis of God's offer of mercy to the entire race.

Over the gates of Plato's school were the words, "Let no one not a geometrician enter here"; but the Word says, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." (Isa. lv. 1.)

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[6] "Christian Spectator," 1831, pp. 294, 295.

## SECTION II.

*Concessions of Calvinists. Illustrating Certain Passages of Scripture.*

According to Dr. William Smith "election embraces no decree or purpose that hinders any one from coming to Christ and being saved if they would. There is nothing that hinders their salvation but their own aversion to holiness and their love of sin; and it is for this that God has purposed to damn them." [7]

Dr. Milner says "All men may be saved if they please. There wants the will only. But such is our natural enmity against God, that though the blood of his Son was freely spilt for all men without exception, not one soul would return to God by true repentance, were it not for his blessed and adorable purpose of election, which before the foundation of the world, determined that some souls should be benefited by his universal redemption and led to repentance toward God, to faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." [8]

Speaking of the election of some, Dr. Nehemiah Adams affirms "No injustice is done to those who are left: salvation is consistently offered to them, and their state is no worse than though all like them had perished." [9] Dr. H. B. Smith, speaking of the differences between the Old and New School Calvinists says, "And as to the limits of the atonement if we do not raise the intricate questions of the order of the decrees and the specific terms of the covenant of redemption, little more than a verbal dispute remains so soon as

[7] "What is Calvinism?" p. 50.

[8] As quoted by G. S. Faber. "The Primitive Doctrine of Election," London, 1862, p. 43.

[9] "Evenings with the Doctrines," p. 246.

we agree that the oblation made by Christ is sufficient for all, is to be offered to all, enhances the guilt of those who reject it; and also had some special respect in the comprehensive divine purpose to the elect." [1]

The difficulties pertaining to Calvinistic doctrine of Decrees and the gospel invitations constrained Dr. John Dick to speak as follows: "There is a greater difficulty here than orthodox divines sometimes seem willing to acknowledge and the mode in which they meet it, is not always satisfactory. . . . . He who sees no difficulty here, has not, as he possibly imagines, more understanding than other men, but less." [2]

Dr. Isaac Watts is more positive and presents a view, which to some is quite plausible. Of the non-elect he says, "God himself has put no effectual and insurmountable bar, or rather no bar at all, in their way, to prevent their acceptance of his grace. His choosing other persons, to make them certain partakers of this grace, is no hindrance to those who were not chosen, from accepting the same. It is my opinion that there is such a thing as a general sufficiency of pardon, grace and happiness provided for all mankind by Jesus Christ. And it is left to their own natural powers under common helps to accept or refuse it." Then follow the reasons for the above. "It is very hard to vindicate the sincerity of the blessed God, or his Son, in their universal offers of grace and salvation to men, and their sending ministers with such messages and invitations to accept of mercy, if there be no such a conditional pardon and salvation provided for them. . . . . It is hard to suppose that the

1 "Faith and Philosophy." p. 286.
2 "Lectures on Theology," p. 375.

great God, who is truth itself, and sincere and faithful in all his dealings, should call upon dying men to trust in a Saviour for eternal life, when this Saviour has not eternal life intrusted with him to give them, if they do repent. It is hard to conceive how the great Governor of the world can be sincere in inviting and requiring sinners who are on the brink of hell to cast themselves upon an empty word of invitation—a mere shadow and appearance of support if there be nothing real to bear them up from those deeps of destruction, and nothing but mere words and empty invitations." Yet he says, "It seems evident to me from several texts of the Word of God that Christ did not die with an equal design for all men; but that there is a special number whom the Father chose and gave to the Son, whose salvation is absolutely secured by the death and intercession of Christ." [3]

Agreeing with Dr. Watts, Dr. Venema says, "Common grace, of which even those who perish partake, consists in the offer of Christ made in the gospel, an offer which is intended by God to be made to all, and in which no one at least is excluded. . . . . All have common grace, and it is possible for all to believe; and if they will believe they will be saved." This is called a general predestination; or, "a general purpose on the part of God to save those who believe—a purpose which had reference also to those who rejected it." If God has not such a general decree or purpose, "then we can not hold that God seriously wills that all men should receive the proposition made to them. If, however, he does so will, then it must have reference to all who read or hear it, and the purpose by

[3] "Works," Leeds edition, Vol. III., p. 468.

which he has ordained a connection between faith and salvation must be general. We are aware, indeed, that there is a particular connection which has reference only to the elect. Yet this proposition is made to all without distinction. For it would be absurd to suppose that God says to all 'believe and ye shall be saved'; and yet that he does not will that they should believe and be saved."[4]

Alluding to the relation of conviction and practice, President Edwards remarks, "And so if men are really convinced of the truth of the things they are told in the gospel, about an eternal world, and the everlasting salvation that Christ has purchased for all that will accept it, it will influence their practice."[5] Dr. Hodge says, "The righteousness of Christ being of infinite value or merit, and being in its nature precisely what all men need, may be offered to all men. It is thus offered to the elect and to the non-elect; and it is offered to both classes conditionally. That condition is a cordial acceptance of it as the only ground of justification. If any of the elect (being adults) fail thus to accept of it, they perish. If any of the non-elect should believe, they would be saved. What more does any Anti-Augustinian scheme provide?[6]

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4 "Institutes." pp. 278, 303-305. This, as I said of the theory of Dr. Watts, is plausible to some minds. Beneath the surface, however, there is the true Calvinistic doctrine that faith—without which no one can be saved—is a gift of God, given to some, withheld from others.

5 "Christian Love," p. 333.

6 "Theology." Vol. II., p. 555. "If any of the elect." This is a wise provision, for elsewhere Dr. Hodge says that the death of Christ renders "the ultimate salvation of the elect absolutely certain. Of the non-elect, he declares they are "in a state of condemnation, sin and misery, from which they are utterly unable to deliver themselves." Surely, this is extremely magnanimous.

In the "Practical Sermons" of Dr. Barnes we find the following: "It is not my purpose in this discourse —though my text (Rev. xxii. 17) might seem to invite it—to dwell on the fact that the gospel is offered to all men; that the Redeemer died for all; that the eternal Father is willing to save all; or that ample provision is made for all who will come. On these points, it is sufficient for my present purpose to say, that my text declares that 'whosoever will may take the water of life freely.'"[7] But of all Calvinists, Dr. Chalmers is, perhaps, the most enthusiastic advocate of the freeness of the gospel. The thought is so fresh and forcible that I can not forbear quoting at some length: "I can not but think that the doctrine of Particular Redemption has been expounded by many of its defenders in such a way as to give an unfortunate aspect to the Christian dispensation. As often treated, we hold it to be a most unpractical and useless theory, and not easy to be vindicated, without the infliction of an unnatural violence on many passages of Scripture. . . . . But far its worst effect is, that it acts as a drag and a deduction from the freeness of the gospel. Its ministers are made to feel the chilling influence of a limitation upon their warrant. If Christ died only for the elect, and not for all, they are puzzled to understand how they should proceed with the calls and invitations of the gospel. They feel themselves disabled from addressing them to all; and this, in their ignorance of the elect and the reprobate individually, seems tantamount to their being disabled from addressing them to any. . . . . There must be a sad misunderstanding somewhere. The commission put into

[7] P. 8.

our hands is to go and preach the gospel to every creature under heaven; and the announcement sounded forth on the world from heaven's vault was, peace on earth, good-will to men. There is no freezing limitation here, but a largeness and munificence of mercy boundless as space, free and open as the expanse of the firmament. We hope, therefore, the gospel, the real gospel, is as unlike the views of some of its interpreters, as creation in all its boundlessness and beauty is unlike to the paltry scheme of some wretched scholastic in the Middle Ages. . . . . In the gospel, the flag of invitation waves in sight of the whole species. It is not inscribed there, 'Whosoever of the elect will'; but 'Whosoever will, let him come and drink of the waters of life freely.' Neither do we read, 'Look unto me, ye specified and selected few'; but 'Look unto me, all ye ends of the earth, and be saved.' It is not in the capacity of an elect sinner, but in the capacity of a sinner, that he who is eventually saved entertains the overtures of reconciliation. These overtures are not made to him as one of the children of election; they are made to him as one of the children of humanity. It is on the stepping-stone of a universal offer that each man reaches and realizes his own particular salvation. . . . . The advocates of universal redemption are quite at one with ourselves as to the reception which the universal offer should meet with from all men. It should meet with universal acceptance, and should be pressed, too, on universal acceptance." [8]

Professor Tyndall has confessed to the world that his religious doubts were strongest in moments of intellectual despondency; that his faith in God's ex-

[8] "Theology." Vol. II., pp. 418, 419, 421.

istence grew firmer in proportion as he came into the clear sunlight of mental conviction. Possibly the experience of the scientist will explain the position of the theologians whose views we have been considering. Certain it is, these writers believe in and contend for a free gospel—an unlimited salvation—a redemption from sin, which every son of Adam ought to accept. They establish the fact beyond all controversy that God does invite, nay, urge every sinful soul to accept the gift of salvation.

## SECTION III.

### *Are the Gospel Invitations Sincere?*

I much prefer to assume, and not to discuss this question. The very thought shocks our moral sentiments. If long entertained it not only impairs the authority of the Scriptures, but attacks and gradually undermines the very citadel of personal religion—faith in the essential righteousness of God. But there is no alternative. The issue is forced upon the student of theology by the position of the Calvinists. As it has been shown (see Chapters III. and IV. of Part I.) one of the fundamental doctrines of Calvinism is the absolute omnipotence of God. In this respect all consistent Calvinists must follow in the footsteps of their great leader; as a recent writer has expressed it, "As we read the Institutes of Calvin, we see that the corner-stone of the whole structure is his doctrine of the Sovereignty of God."[9] Hence, the logical consistency of their position that if God were so disposed he could save every soul in the world.

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[9] Rev. James B. Gregg. "New Englander," 1880, p. 454.

All modern Calvinists agree in declaring the universality of the gospel invitations. God can, but does not save all whom He invites. Consequently arises the difficulty concerning which Dr. Chalmers says "there must be a sad misunderstanding somewhere," while Dr. Dick declares that the Calvinist, who is determined to see "no difficulty here, has not, as he probably imagines, more understanding than other men, but less." "The many declarations in which God exhorts man to keep his commandments, appear to him ironical, as if a father were to say to his child, 'Come,' while he knows that he can not come!" [1] Of those to whom God does not give efficacious grace, Calvin says, "He directs his voice to them, but it is that they may become more deaf; he kindles a light, but it is that they may be made blind; he publishes his doctrine, but it is that they may be more besotted; he applies a remedy, but it is that they may not be healed." [2]

Rev. John Sladen informs his hearers, "All that God designed to save he saves; but he actually saves some only, therefore, he designed to save only some of fallen Adam's children, for, if we consider God as infinite in wisdom, and of almighty power, there can not be a more rational way of arguing than from his acts to his designs." [3] This is similar to Symington's argument, who says in behalf of a limited atonement, "The event is the best interpreter of the divine intention." [4] Dr. Nehemiah Adams says, "Not one more,

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1 Said of Luther. Hagenbach's "Hist. of Doc.," Vol. II., p. 259.
2 "Institutes." B. III., Chap. XXIV., Sec. 13
3 "A Defence of Gospel Doc.," p. 78
4 As quoted in Bledsoe's "Theodicy," p. 235

not one less will be saved than God purposed." [5] "God never designed to save every individual; since, if he had, every individual would and must be saved; for his counsel shall stand and he will do all his pleasure." [6]

It is now evident that if Calvinists have correctly interpreted the Scriptures, the universal invitations which constantly meet the eye of sinners, such as, "Ho, every one that thirsteth," "Come unto me all ye that labor;" "The spirit and the bride say, Come; And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst, Come, And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely," do not and can not mean what the plain, ordinary readers in all ages have understood by them.

With Justin Martyr, Ambrose and Chrysostom of the early Church, and with many thousands of modern Christians, I had ignorantly thought that the universal invitations to the gospel feast meant what they said—expressed the real sentiments and sincere desires of God. But such is not the case—if Calvinism be correct—for while the everlasting Father does invite all through his revealed will, his secret will—his real desire is that only a certain number shall accept his overtures of mercy. Thus speaks Dr. Lyman Atwater, who says, "It results from the universality of God's decrees, as now set forth, that they who accept it, must also accept the distinction between the decretive and the preceptive will of God, *i. e.*, inasmuch as many things occur contrary to his commands, while yet he foreordains all things, it must be that in these cases

[5] "Evenings with the Doctrines," p. 257

[6] Toplady. "Works," p. 692.

he proposes one thing and commands another. This can not be evaded by any who admit the universality of his decrees or purposes."[7] Commenting on Rom. ix. 19, Dr. E. D. Griffin says, "His decretive will in distinction from his preceptive—a distinction which the apostle here brings into view and does not deny, but in the context clearly affirms."[8]

Concerning the secret will of God, Dr. Emmons declares that it "solely respects the taking place of those things which he determined from eternity should take place, without any regard to the nature of them, whether morally good or morally evil. It was his secret will that not only holiness and happiness, but that sin and misery also should take place among his intelligent creatures. It is his secret will that all the elect shall repent and believe, and that all the non-elect shall live and die in impenitence and unbelief: though he loves faith and repentance and hates impenitence and unbelief."[9]

In the Bibliotheca Sacra of 1856 there is a Review of Toplady's Theology by Prof. Geo. N. Boardman, D. D. Wesley's great opponent says, "Although the will of God, considered in itself, is simply one and the same; yet in condescension to the present capacities of men, the Divine Will is very properly distinguished into secret and revealed. Thus it was his revealed will that Pharaoh should let the Israelites go: that

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[7] "Bib. Sacra," Vol. XXI., p. 82. The invasion has been attempted by one of Dr. Atwater's friends. With what success will appear further on. Doubtless, the logic of Dr. Atwater is correct in maintaining that he who accepts his premises ought to grant his conclusion. Strange that he does not question and deny the soundness of his premises.

[8] "Divine Efficiency," p. 147.

[9] "Works." Vol. II., p. 346.

Abraham should sacrifice his son ; that Peter should not deny Christ ; but as was proved by the event, it was his secret will that Pharaoh should not let Israel go ; that Abraham should not sacrifice Isaac, and that Peter should deny his Lord." To this Professor Boardman adds, as an explanation, "It must not be inferred from this that God's will is ever contrary to itself. The secret will of God is in reality his will : while that which is revealed has reference to the various circumstances of men. The hidden will is peremptory and absolute."[1] Here we have new light. It must be confessed the rays therefrom are cold, freezing cold, but it can not be denied that the truth as it is in Jesus has burst upon and overwhelmed us.

As the sincerity of Almighty Love was eluding us, as it was getting every moment less and less real, I had hoped—doubtless, with the reader, that our unerring interpreters of the Bible would leave untouched, the only remaining comfort of the non-elect, viz.: an eternal antagonism between the two Divine wills. But no ; even this small hope vanishes as the truth is forced upon me that the universal invitations of the gospel are no more to be relied upon than are the dreams of a madman ; for as these theologians tell us, they are in no sense the real expression of the Divine will. These invitations are made out of gracious condescension to our finite capacities : they convey no truth, they express no reality, for in all cases "the secret will of God, is in reality, his will."

The reasoning of this school of Calvinists when explaining the doctrine of a limited atonement, irre-

[1] Pages, 812, 813.

sistibly leads to a flat denial of the Divine sincerity. To them it may appear reasonable and satisfactory; but to other Calvinists it does not. Thus President R. L. Dabney, while claiming "that there is a just distinction between God's decretive and preceptive will," says "but let the question be stated thus: Do all the solemn and tender entreaties of God to sinners express no more, as to the non-elect, than a purpose in God, uncompassionate and merely rectoral, to acquit himself of his legislative function towards them? To speak after the manner of men, have all these apparently touching appeals after all no heart in them? We can not but deem it an unfortunate logic which constrains a man to take this view of them. How much more simple and satisfactory to take them for just what they express? evidences of a true compassion, which yet is restrained, in the case of the unknown class, the non-elect, by consistent and holy reasons, from taking the form of a volition to regenerate." The average reader will agree with Dr. Dabney that there must be some heart in the gospel invitations; that the Divine compassion for lost souls which is constantly breaking forth in such expressions as "Cast away from you all your transgressions whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" must be rooted in everlasting sincerity. But let us see if Dr. Dabney has, in any essential degree, a better solution. After declaring that "the plain Christian mind will ever stumble on this fatal question, How can a truthful and consistent God have two opposite wills about the same object?" he adds. "It is far more Scriptural, and, as we trust, has

been shown, far more logical to say, that an immutable and sovereign God never had but one will (one purpose, or volition), as to this lost man; as a faithful God would never publish any other volition than the one he entertained, but that it was entirely consistent for God to compassionate where he never purposed nor promised to save, because this sincere compassion was restrained within the limits God announced by his own wisdom."[2] Certainly this is a remarkable solution. Dr. Dabney believes in, and contends for, God's real compassion for the non-elect; yet he gravely tells us that this yearning of the Father for the return of his lost children does not lead to salvation because "He never purposed nor promised to save." If this signifies anything, it must mean that the universal invitations of the gospel were never intended by God as promises to the non-elect.

True, the same language between man and man would always be understood as a promise; is so understood by every ordinary reader of the Bible throughout Christendom: but nevertheless it is all a mistake. God has never purposed nor promised to save the non-elect; he has simply announced to the world that he really pities, sincerely compassionates them. Beyond all controversy Dr. Dabney and Dr. Toplady are in the same dilemma. They simply differ in the choice of the horn on which they shall be impaled. Dr. Toplady says God's universal invitations are not real, because they are in no essential sense the expression of his will. Dr. Dabney replies, "No, you are mistaken, Dr. Toplady. Your logic is at fault; these invitations of God are sincere; they express his real

[2] "Princeton Review," July, 1878, p. 59.

compassion, you err in supposing them to be promises; that, they are not and were never intended to be.

One moment's serious thought will explode these sophisms. The universal invitations of the gospel are sincere, not only because they express God's real compassion, but because they are his promises to be fulfilled the instant the conditions are truly met. There is not one declaration within the pages of the Bible, offering peace and salvation to the troubled soul that is not a promise to any and every one who reads. As Dr. Chalmers has said: "In no place in the Bible is pardon addressed to any man on the footing that he is one of the elect; but in all places of the Bible pardon is addressed to every man on the footing that he is one of the species. On the former footing, there would be no warrant to any for the faith of the gospel, for no man knows at the commencement of his Christianity that he is one of the elect. On the latter footing, there is a distinct warrant to all, if they so choose, for the faith of the gospel—for every man knows that he is one of the human race. It is most assuredly in his latter capacity and not in his former, that the calls and offers and entreaties of the gospel are brought to his door."[3] He who was "the Way, the Truth, and the Life," who was a perfect scourge to all hypocrites, and who declared that every idle word shall be brought to judgment, meant exactly, without any qualifications or evasions whatsoever, what his words seem to mean when he said "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

[3] "Theology," Vol. II., p. 422.

(Matt. xi. 28, 29). Anything short of this is unmitigated hypocrisy.

## SECTION IV.

### *The Atonement, An Expression of God's Universal Love.*

Beyond all controversy the attributes and character of Deity should be considered with veiled faces and in the spirit of profound reverence. We can not "find out the Almighty unto perfection," for as the heavens are higher than the earth," so are his ways higher than our ways, and his thoughts than our thoughts. Hence as the devout theologian analyzes the Divine Attributes he has no intention of unduly magnifying one above another. Like the subsistences in the Godhead, each is perfect in its sphere, while of necessity all are related by a governing principle. What this central attribute of Deity is, has been variously defined, just as the student of theology has been most influenced by natural or by moral ideas of God's government. As we have seen, Calvinism has always taken the natural as the central principle of the Divine procedure, and consequently the omnipotence of God is the key which unlocks the mysteries of Calvinistic theology. Hence this attribute has been called "the first article of our Faith," while those who deny it are charged with being "Atheists." Against this false view of the Divine character many thoughtful men have always rebelled. Nor do the Scriptures speak with any uncertainty. So far as any one term can express the governing attribute in the nature of God, it is not power, nor wisdom, but love. "He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is

love. . . . . And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love ; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." (1. John iv. 8-16.)

It will be interesting and profitable to notice a few of the many comments on this passage. Says Alford, "Love is the very essence, not merely an attribute, of God. It is co-essential with Him." Cowles remarks " In form, the statement seems abstract, metaphysical; for observe, it is not that God is kind, affectionate, evermore manifesting his good will ; but that he is love itself—the very impersonation of love ; all love, and nothing else but love. It is of course comprehensive, all embracing. It means that there can never be anything in him, nothing coming from him, that is not loving—an outgoing of His love.

Christlieb declares, ". . . . As spirituality is the vital foundation of his physical and intellectual perfections, so holy love is the internal basis of all his moral perfections, and a necessary deduction from the true idea of the absolute." [4] Delitzsch says, ". . . . When the apostle says of God, not that he is *the* love, but that he *is* love, *i. e.*, that he is love in the deepest ground and entire circuit of his nature living itself forth, we obtain the disclosure—which follows, besides, from the fact, that he is light, absolutely free from darkness (1. John i. 5)—that the will which is the root of his being has love as its impulse, and is thus the will of love." [5]

This all controlling characteristic of the Divine Nature clearly and beautifully explains the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. He is not only "the Lamb of God

4 " Modern Doubt and Christian Belief," p. 222.

5 " Biblical Psychology," p. 203.

which taketh away the sin of the world," but he is the very Incarnation of the Father's love for every one whom he has created. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." All attempts of the Calvinists to change the obvious meaning of this passage so as to favor their doctrine of a limited atonement have signally failed. The object of God's love was the world, the entire human race, and it was the same to all, not restricted to a certain class otherwise designated as "the elect." The same doctrine is expounded by the Apostle Paul. "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again." (II. Cor. v. 14-15.) On this passage, Dr. Barnes says, "The phrase 'for all' evidently means for all mankind; for every man. This is an exceedingly important expression in regard to the extent of the atonement. . . . . It demonstrates that the atonement was general, and had, in itself considered, no limitation and no particular reference to any one class or condition of men, and no particular applicability to one class more than another." Speaking of the ministry of reconciliation, Paul says "that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them:" (verse 19). Lange says the "world" "signifies the human race, and as it is here without the article, it means perhaps a 'whole world.'"

"Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time;" (I. Tim. ii. 6). "For, therefore, we

both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe" (iv. 10). Of the former passage Alford says, "This oneness of the Mediator, involving in itself the universality of Redemption, was the great subject of Christian testimony." "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men" (Titus ii. 11). "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man" (Heb. ii. 9). Commenting on this Dr. Charles Hodge says, "Christ tasted death for every one of the objects of redemption" thus contradicting the plain sense of the passage; for allowing full scope for all differences of opinion concerning the gender, the "all" is incontestably declared. The same truth is taught in Rom. v. 18: "Therefore, as by the offense of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." While this passage gives no hope to Universalism, it positively condemns the doctrine of a restricted atonement. "And he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (1. John ii. 2). "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life" (John iii. 14,15). The historic scene to which the Master here alludes is familiar to all. The Israelites were in a spirit of wicked distrust and bitter murmurings. As a punishment the Lord sent fiery serpents which de-

stroyed many of the people. The infliction had the desired effect: the people were humbled and sought the intercession of Moses. "And the Lord said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent and set it upon a pole; and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole; and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass he lived." Here the intention and the provision were as wide as the disease. So, according to Jesus is the divine remedy. Hence, sorrowing men in all ages have found comfort in reading that wonderful prophecy—the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah. It speaks with no uncertainty of the universal provisions of the gospel, declaring "All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." According to Neander, the Parable of the Prodigal Son reveals the Father's love for the sinful and rebukes "not merely the Jewish exclusiveness, but all those limitations of God's purposes for the salvation of the human race, whether before or after Christ, which the arbitrary creeds of men have attributed to the divine decrees. The parable clearly implies that the love of the Father contemplates the salvation of all his fallen children among all generations of men." [6]

It will now be in order to notice one or two objections often urged against the Arminian view of these and other passages. (1) It may be said, as President Dabney has affirmed, that these expressions of love mean nothing more than "a propension of benevolence

[6] "Life of Christ," p. 214.

not matured into the volition to redeem, of which Christ's mission is a sincere manifestation to all sinners." Without anticipating the consideration of this solution upon which Dr. Dabney so confidently relies, I may say, in passing, that it radically fails to account for the plain, unequivocal language of the Bible. In all of these passages there is but one class of men considered. That class embraces all who are lost in sin. For them God has an infinite love. Christ came as the incarnation of that love to die for them that they through Him might be saved. The expressions of God's love have, or have not a reference to "the elect." Dr. Dabney may take his choice. Whatever is declared of one is declared of all.

This is substantially the same answer which is to be made to the second objection, namely, "Christ's death was sufficient for all, but efficacious only for the elect." Thus Dr. N. L. Rice remarks, "It is objected again, that according to the Calvinistic view, Christ made no atonement for the non-elect, and our Arminian friends have urged against the doctrine all those passages of Scripture which represent Christ as having died for all men. But the word 'for,' like all other prepositions, has a number of meanings. What, then, do they mean by affirming that Christ died for all men? Do they mean that he made an atonement, which, in consequence of his infinite dignity, is sufficient for all men? If so, we have no controversy with them; for we hold that the Atonement is of infinite value, and that no one is lost because its virtue is exhausted. Do they mean that in making an atonement Christ designed to offer salvation indiscriminately to all men? If so, we agree with them. Our views of

the gospel require us to preach it 'to every creature.' Do they mean that Christ really purposed to save all men by his death? They can not mean this; for, in the first place, multitudes were forever lost before he died, and it will scarcely be pretended that he designed to save them. In the second place, he certainly knew who would believe and be saved: for he knew all things; and it would be absurd to say that he designed to save those he knew he never would save." [7] I have purposely quoted this author at some length that his argument may be fairly analyzed. Notice (*a*) Dr. Rice confesses that Christ did not really purpose to save all men; yet (*b*) Christ offers "salvation indiscriminately to all men." Query: Is Christ divided in that he offers a thing while at the same time he never really purposes to give it? This must be, or else Dr. Rice uses the word "purposed" in the double sense of sincere desire, or honest intention and positive volition. The Arminian readily answers the question by saying Christ really purposed to save all who would freely yield themselves to the influences of the Holy Spirit. So far, the "purpose" is as wide as the race. But if the question of divine knowledge or foreknowledge is brought into the problem—which Dr. Rice raises, and by-the-way, one can not help wondering why a Calvinist should confound the divine purpose, or decree to save, with the knowledge of who would believe,—then the intention or purpose of Christ passes into the positive volition to save those only who are foreseen to be obedient. If this is what Dr. Rice means by saying Christ "certainly knew who would believe and be saved" he has passed into the domain of Arminian

[7] "God Sovereign and Man Free," p. 118.

theology. If not, then this part of his argument not only amounts to nothing, but it makes Jesus offer to all men that which he never purposed to bestow,—which is usually designated as hypocrisy. But (*c*) Dr. Rice is generous in saying the atonement "is sufficient for all men." Doubtless it is; but of what account in the saving of sinners is its mere sufficiency unless applied by the divine purpose? Moreover, this language is not biblical. I gladly challenge any Calvinist to produce one passage of God's Word declaring Christ did not die for all, or affirming that while his death is sufficient for all it is efficacious only for the elect. The proposition is of that scholastic spirit which can

> "The hair divide
> Between the west and southwest side,"

and would never have been thought of were it not that a pet theory demanded an additional prop. Dr. Jenkyn has truly said, "An all-sufficiency, yet not intended for all who are invited to partake of it, is such an awful imposture that I grudge the very ink that mentions it in connection with the Gospel of Truth." [8]

(3) With all Calvinists, Dr. Charles Hodge argues a limited atonement from the Express Declarations of Scripture. These are such passages as "Even as Christ loved the church and gave himself for it" (Eph. v. 25). "As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father, and I lay down my life for the sheep" (John x. 15). "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John xv. 13). The reader will notice that these expressions are of the same general character as Paul's

[8] "The Extent of the Atonement," p. 104.

words to Timothy—previously quoted—where God is declared to be the Saviour "of all men, specially of those that believe." Of necessity there is a more intimate and vital relation existing between Jesus Christ and his followers, than there can be between him and those who have not exercised saving faith. To deny this is to affirm the unreality of all spiritual distinctions; hence Paul appropriately notices this relation by saying that while God is the Saviour of all men, yet he is specially so of those who love him. As Alford remarks, "He is the same Saviour towards, and of all; but these alone appropriate his salvation." Now as Scripture best explains Scripture, it is certainly fair to say that the passages adduced by Dr. Hodge do not mean anything essentially different from those which we have been considering. If the clearly expressed parts of the Bible are to have the preference, if they are to interpret the more obscure passages, then the many clear and unequivocal affirmations of the universal extent of the atonement are not to be interpreted by such tantalizing words as "the Atonement was sufficient for all, but efficacious only for the elect." Moreover, the terms "church," "sheep" and "friends" are susceptible of a different meaning from that conveyed by Dr. Hodge, namely, those foreseen to be true believers. As thus considered, they do sustain a peculiar relation to the Saviour—as Paul declares, and as already explained—while at the same time the truth for which I am here contending is fully vindicated.

SECTION V.

*The Salvation of All Men, the Pleasure and Will of God.*

This proposition is a logical deduction from the universality of God's love. But not satisfied with the statement that the Father of Mercies "with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning" has an infinite love for every sinful soul, the Bible unmistakably declares that the salvation of all men is according to the pleasure and will of God. "Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit; for why will ye die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye" (Ezek. xviii. 31, 32). "Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" (Ezek. xxxiii. 11). "For he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men" (Lamentations iii. 33). Paul exhorts that "supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men," giving as a reason, "For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth" (1. Tim. ii. 3, 4). Of this passage Calvin says, "By this he assuredly means nothing more than that the way of salvation was not shut against any order of of men."[9] If I should say this was far from expressing

[9] "Institutes," B. III., ch. xxiv., Sec. 16.

the meaning of the passage, and that indicates a lamentable lack of exegetical fairness on the part of the great Reformer, the reader might possibly charge me with being prejudiced. Let Alford speak, who certainly can not be charged with Arminian tendencies. "Calvin most unworthily shuffles out of the decisive testimony borne by this passage to universal redemption, saying, 'The Apostle simply means, that no people or rank in the world is excluded from salvation.'" The testimony of Dr. Albert Barnes is equally explicit. "This verse (4th) proves (1) that salvation is provided for all: for if God wished all men to be saved, he would undoubtedly make provision for their salvation; and if he had not made such provision, it could not be said that he desired their salvation, since no one can doubt that he has power to provide for the salvation of all; (2) that salvation should be offered to all men; for if God desires it, it is right for his ministers to announce that desire, and if he desires it, it is not proper for them to announce anything contrary to this: (3) that men are to blame if they are not saved. If God did not wish their salvation, and if he had made no provision for it, they could not be to blame if they rejected the gospel. If God wishes it, and has made provision for it, and they are not saved, the sin must be their own." This is anything but sound Calvinism, but nevertheless it rings with good common sense and is Scripturally consistent. "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (II. Peter iii. 9).

A brief résumé of the Bible argument on this

subject may assist the reader in determining the correctness of the position here maintained. We have found (1) that all men are invited to partake of a common salvation, Calvinists themselves being the judges. (2) That these universal invitations are uttered in all Godly sincerity. (3) That they are thus offered because Jesus Christ has made an unlimited atonement, has tasted death for every man. (4) That this universal atonement is the expression of the sincere pleasure and will of God, who is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

This naturally leads us to the consideration of the question, What is meant by the "will of God" as used in the above passages? In the Princeton Review of July, 1878, President Robert L. Dabney considered this question in an article entitled "God's Indiscriminate Proposals of Mercy as Related to His Power, Wisdom and Sincerity." It is the best Calvinistic solution with which I am acquainted, and I should be constrained to accept it were I not convinced that its foundation principles are decidedly fallacious. In former pages I have alluded to, and quoted a few sentences from this article. I now propose to examine it more thoroughly, and, so far as possible, fairly test it upon its own merits.

Commencing his article, Dr. Dabney says, "If God makes proposals of mercy to men, who, he foresees, will certainly reject them and perish, and whom he immutably purposes to leave without effectual calling, how can his power and wisdom be cleared, save at the expense of his sincerity? or his sincerity at the expense of his wisdom or power? This is obviously the

point in the Reformed or Augustinian theology most difficult of adjustment. . . . . The occasion for calling in question either God's sincerity, or his wisdom, or power, upon the supposition of an unconditional decree, arises from three classes of Scriptures. One is the indiscriminate offer of salvation. Another is the ascription of Christ's sacrifice to love for 'the world' as its motive, and the calling of him the 'Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world,' 'giveth himself for the world,' etc. The third is composed of those which present God as pitying all sinners, and even those who are never saved. Every reader's mind will suggest texts of each class. Now, it is notorious that these furnish the armory from which the Arminians equip their most pertinacious attacks on Calvinism; that it is on these texts the Calvinistic exegesis labors most and displays the most uncertainty; and that the usual Calvinistic solutions of them are scornfully denounced as inadequate by their opponents. These facts, of course, do not prove that the Arminians are right; but they evince the occasion for, and utility of, more satisfactory discussion."[1]

Doubtless the reader rejoices with me in knowing that President Dabney is not of that class of Calvinists who think their theology beyond improvement. He has clearly and satisfactorily stated the problem. He has confessed the seeming strength of the Arminian position, and the corresponding difficulties of the "usual Calvinistic solutions." Let us now candidly examine his argument in behalf of a limited atonement.

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[1] Pages 33, 34

The main point in the solution is "best indicated by an analogical instance." Thus he says, "A human ruler may have full power and authority over the punishment of a culprit, may declare consistently his sincere compassion for him, and may yet freely elect to destroy him." Washington is selected as the ruler and Major André as the culprit. Chief-Justice Marshall in his "Life of Washington" speaks of this historic scene as follows: "Perhaps on no occasion of his life did the commander-in-chief obey with more reluctance the stern mandates of duty and of policy." Commenting on this, Dr. Dabney says, "Washington had plenary power to kill or to save alive. His compassion for the criminal was real and profound. Yet he signed his death-warrant with spontaneous decision. The solution is not the least difficult either for philosphy or common sense." After analyzing human volitions, Dr. Dabney returns to the analogy. He says "Washinton's volition to sign the death-warrant of André did not arise from the fact that his compassion was slight or feigned, but from the fact that it was rationally counterpoised by a complex of superior judgments and propensions of wisdom, duty, patriotism, and moral indignation." "Let us suppose that one of André's intercessors (and he had them—even among the Americans) standing by, and hearing the commanding general say, as he took up the pen to sign the fatal paper, 'I do this with the deepest reluctance and pity;' should have retorted: 'Since you are supreme in this matter, and have full bodily ability to throw down that pen, we shall know by your signing this warrant that your pity is hypocritical!' The petulance of this charge would have been equal

to its folly. The pity was real ; but was restrained by superior elements of motive : Washington had official and bodily power to discharge the criminal ; but he had not the sanction of his own wisdom and justice. Thus his pity was genuine, and yet his volition not to indulge it free and sovereign." This is followed by an exposition of the Arminian and the ordinary Calvinistic views, which are to "be exploded by explaining the nature of motive and free rational volition." Here the principle is applied to the question at issue. "The correct answer to the Arminian is to show him that the existence of a real and unfeigned pity in God for 'him that dieth' does not imply that God has exhausted his divine power in vain to renew the creature's 'free will' in a way consistent with its nature, because the pity may have been truly in God, and yet countervailed by superior motives, so that he did not will to exert his omnipotence for that sinner's renewal."

"The other extreme receives the same reply : the absence of an omnipotent (and inevitably efficient) volition to renew that soul does not prove the absence of a true compassion in God for him ; and for the same reason the propension may have been in God, but restrained from rising into a volition by superior rational motives."[2] It is quite probable that Dr. Dabney has made himself sufficiently clear to the reader ; but desiring to have the principle thoroughly understood I will conclude this part of the argument in his own words, namely, "that God does have compassion for the reprobate, but not express volition to save them, because his infinite wisdom regulates his

[2] Pages 36, 37, 38.

whole will and guides and harmonizes (not suppresses) all its active principles." [3]

To our author "the supposed obstacles" against the adoption of this solution, "seem to class themselves under three heads. (1) The difference between a finite and an infinite almighty governor makes the parallel worthless. (2) Such a theory of motive and free agency may not be applied to the divine will, because of God's absolute simplicity of being, and the unity of his attributes with his essence, the total lack of 'passive powers' in his glorious nature, and the unity and eternity of his whole will as to all events. It is feared that the parallel would misrepresent God's activities of will by a vicious anthropomorphism. (3) No such balancing of subjective motives takes place without inward strivings, which would be inconsistent with God's immutability and blessedness." [4]

Not wishing to forget the real question at issue I shall rest the case on the first objection suggested by Dr. Dabney, namely, "The difference between a finite and an infinite almighty governor makes the parallel worthless." Our author disposes of this objection by affirming two propositions, namely: (1) That in case of the lost there are other reasons known only by God, than indifference to their fate, or a conscious inability to save. (2) That the ultimate end of God's government is his own glory.

To all intents and purposes the first statement belongs to the second. This is conceded by Dr. Dabney. Speaking of the ultimate ends of God's government as not including "the happiness of the

[3] P. 61.

[4] Page 38.

largest possible number of sinners, but something else still more worthy of God;" he says, "When we have admitted this, we have virtually admitted that God may see, in his own omniscience, a rational ground other than inability for restraining his actual propension of pity towards a given sinner."

The argument, therefore, is restricted to the one consideration whether optimism is, or is not, a correct philosophical solution of God's government. Upon this question there is a great diversity of opinion even among eminent Calvinists. Speaking of the hypothesis of Leibnitz, Dr. Chalmers says: "If it be not an offensive weapon with which we may beat down and demolish the strongholds of the sceptic, it is, at least, an armor of defense with which we may cause all his shafts to fall harmless at our feet." [5]

Dr. Fitch of New Haven fame speaks much more positively saying, "Show us a God who, able to advance the holiness of the universe forever and to protect it from all the inroads of sin, does nevertheless, in the choice of his heart respecting a whole universe, actually reject such protection, and prefer to gratify his subjects with a mere exhibition at the expense of the sin and misery of one or many of his subjects; and we shall always see him purposely leading off the holy into sin and preferring their rebellion to obedience." [6]

Beyond all question this is a radical departure from Old School theology. It is in the right direction; for whether we accept or reject the philosophical terminology of optimism the substantial truth of the doctrine is rapidly gaining acceptance. As it is a question

[5] As quoted by Bledsoe. "Theodicy," p. 185.

[6] As quoted in Griffin's Divine Efficiency, p. 31.

upon which even Calvinists do not agree, and as it involves a critical study of the Intuitions, I shall dismiss it by affirming that which I regard as a moral axiom, namely, God's glory can never ignore the rights of his creatures.

Inasmuch as the above objection is the only one noticed by Dr. Dabney as vitiating his analogy, I suppose it never occurred to him that there were other objections far more serious. They will now be considered. The analogy is fallacious because it offers no just comparison between Washington and the spy on one hand, and God and the non-elect on the other. Of course I do not claim that the analogy must be perfect in all respects. By no means. Allowing for all reasonable divergencies, I yet claim that the analogy is radically defective, because (1) The language of Washington is essentially different from that used by the Lord God. I agree with Dr. Dabney that Washington's pity for André was sincere ; but observe, the commanding general never conveyed, by word or hint, to any one the idea that he could and would save the unfortunate officer. On the contrary, he made the one impression on André's friends that the spy must die. Had he told the officer or his friends that he should be saved, had he made the impression over and over again that the spy could be saved, while, at the same time, knowing that it was not true, then it would have been in order for Dr. Dabney to have spoken of Washington's supposed sincerity. But while the commander-in-chief did not thus speak, God has so declared to the world. He has not only expressed sympathy and pity for the non-elect, but he has invited them to the same salvation which is given to the

elect. He urges them to accept, tells them that Jesus died that they might live, makes the impression upon all of them that he is waiting for them to come that he may bestow the gift of eternal life upon them, while at the same time, according to Dr. Dabney, God has never "purposed" any such thing. If this would not be insincerity, then I confess I do not know what it could be. Nor do I see how the so-called "solution" adds one ray of light. Nay, it is like the theology of Job's friends which "darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge" in that it creates a new difficulty in trying to solve an old one. The sincerity of God's pity is saved at the expense of his sincerity in offering salvation to all. But possibly the reader may say that I have misunderstood Dr. Dabney in supposing him to teach that God *does* promise salvation to all: I reply, if this be so, then so much the worse for the theory. Beyond all controversy God offers salvation to all. This, as we have seen in a previous section, is conceded by nearly all Calvinists. If this truth is denied by Dr. Dabney, then a "Thus saith the Lord" will be sufficient to silence him. But he does not deny it: on the contrary he repeatedly asserts it. In the first place, the very title of the article proves it—"God's indiscriminate proposals of mercy." Again, he says, "Let us now represent to ourselves the large number of texts in which God entreats sinners to turn from the ways of destruction. They are addressed by him to all men, without distinction of elect and non-elect. When, for instance, the Redeemer commands us to 'preach the gospel to every creature' it is impossible by any exegetical pressure to make the words mean 'every elect creature' because he adds in the

next verse (Mark xvi. 16), 'He that believeth not shall be damned.' This possible subject is among the 'every creature' body to whom the overtures of mercy are to be made. But no 'elect creature' can be damned. Now, no straightforward mind can ever be satisfied that the utterance of entreaties to shun destruction are not the expression of compassion, if they come from a sincere person. The explanations of the gospel calls to the non-elect which do not candidly recognize this truth, must ever carry a fatal weight with the great body of Christians." [7]

Doubtless this confession is sufficient. God does make "indiscriminate proposals of mercy": he does offer Jesus Christ as a Redeemer to every creature: he does entreat every creature "to shun destruction"; he does make the impression upon every creature that he may be saved: and yet, this is all one grand mistake, a stupendous delusion, for he has "never purposed nor promised to save" all. I do not know how Dr. Dabney would define a "promise," but it seems to me his solution involves a serious self-contradiction.

(2) Equally fallacious is the analogy between André and the non-elect. The spy is justly called a "culprit," a "criminal"; of course the non-elect are not only assumed to be such, but are declared to be worthy of eternal condemnation. If this were true, if the decree of passing by the non-elect is conditioned on the divine foreknowledge of their character, then so far Dr. Dabney would remain untouched by this argument. All Calvinists are supralapsarians or sublapsarians. In a subsequent chapter more than a passing thought will be given to these terms. At present

[7] P. 58.

let it suffice to say the supralapsarians affirm that before creation, and hence before the existence of any human moral character, God determined to save some and to pass others by. The sublapsarians declare this doctrine harsh and unreasonable, and maintain that God's decree to save or not to save presupposes the race as fallen; and therefore as deserving of condemnation. Concerning this Dr. Dabney says, supralapsarians retort that this scheme makes God's decree as truly conditioned on the creature's action as the Arminian, though on a different condition. So the debate proceeds."[8]

Now it is evident that if Dr. Dabney had claimed to be a Sublapsarian Calvinist, so far my second argument would not be valid. But he makes no such claim. On the contrary, he thinks the distinction is useless and should never have been made.

"But he who apprehends the action of the infinite mind reasonably and Scripturally at once, sees that, while the sublapsarian is right in his spirit and aim, both parties are wrong in their method, and the issue is one which should never have been raised. . . . . One result decreed is to depend on another result decreed. But as the decree is God's consciousness, all is equally primary. Thus there will be neither *supra*- nor *infra*-lapsarian, and no room for their debate."[9] Consequently I am strictly within the bounds of Christian fairness when I say that the analogy of Dr. Dabney is radically wrong in assuming the criminal state of the non-elect. André was a spy: as such he was extremely dangerous to the American cause. As a patriot, Washington was bound, by every sacred im-

[8] P. 47.
[9] P. 47.

pulse, by the dictates of sober judgment, to sign the death-warrant. But no such language can be used in reference to the non-elect. As yet they have no existence: hence they have no moral character. Consequently where is the reason, where is the sense of justice which must be satisfied by the eternally decreed rejection of the non-elect? Truly we search in vain for it, as it nowhere exists except in the Calvinistic dogma that God's glory demands the eternal condemnation of the non-elect.

This brings us to the consideration of the third objection against Dr. Dabney's argument: namely (3) It is grounded on the Arminian doctrine of Foreknowledge. Of course this is a serious charge to bring against a Calvinistic writer. Nor do I suppose for a moment that Dr. Dabney will admit its correctness, but I doubt not the reader will be able to judge of the merits of the case, and to him, therefore, I leave the issue. In different parts of the article we are told "that God's election to life is unconditioned," "that God's selection of Jacob was not conditioned on his foreseen penitence or faith." [1]

Rejecting divine foresight as the condition of election, it is more than probable that Dr. Dabney also rejects it as the condition why some men are not elected: because (*a*) This, as we have seen, (see Chapter II. of Part I.) is consistent Calvinism. Calvin says, "No one can deny but God foreknew Adam's fall, and foreknew it because he had ordained it by his own decree." Equally explicit is the Westminster Confession of Faith. "Although God knows whatsoever may or can come to pass, upon all supposed condi-

[1] Pages 50, 51.

tions; yet hath he not decreed anything because he foresaw it as future, or as that which would come to pass, upon such conditions." Luther taught "All things whatever, arise from, and depend upon the divine appointment; whereby it was preordained who should receive the word of life, and who should disbelieve it; who should be delivered from their sins, and who should be hardened in them: who should be justified and who condemned." Much more might be said, but doubtless I have quoted enough to show that Calvinism has always denied that the decree to pass by the non-elect was conditioned on man's foreseen rejection. (*b*) Dr. Dabney tells us that to the supralapsarians the order of the decrees adopted by the sublapsarians is "as truly conditioned on the creature's action as the Arminian, though on a different condition." This recognizes the essentially Arminian tendency of making some condition the basis of the decrees. (*c*) Dr. Dabney declares that the terms "supralapsarian" and "sublapsarian"—the only place where there is any possible reason for mentioning the decrees in connection with foresight—are wrong, and the issue "should never have been raised." (*d*) Moreover, the decrees are one. "The decree which determines so vast a multitude of parts is itself a unit. The whole all-comprehending thought is one, co-etaneous intuition, the whole decree one act of the will." This clearly shows that if it is wrong to say that election is based on divine foresight, it is equally wrong to say it of reprobation. Hence, I ask in all seriousness, What right has Dr. Dabney to speak so often and fluently of the divine foresight? He does this repeatedly. The first sentence in his article begins with the

assumption, "If God makes proposals of mercy to men, who he foresees will certainly reject them, and perish." Speaking of Jacob's sins and of his election, he asks "Did not God feel, notwithstanding this properly overruling rational motive, the abhorrence for Jacob's foreseen original sin and actual meanness, suitable for an infinitely holy nature to feel, and naturally tending, had it not been counterpoised, to Jacob's righteous rejection? Again, "God doubtless felt then a similar moral reprehension for Jacob's foreseen, supplanting falsehood to that which he felt for Esau's heady self-will." "We dare not say that God could distinctly foresee all Jacob's supplanting falsehood, and feel no disapprobation whatever; it would come near to blasphemy."[2] "Foresee," indeed! Why not say, decreed or determined "falsehood"? Doubtless because it would not only come near to being, but would be blasphemy. Yet the latter is the real meaning of Dr. Dabney; or at least what his position logically and irresistibly means. I trust the reader now sees the justness of my charge against Dr. Dabney. His article is permeated with, and many of his assumptions are based upon, the divine foresight of men's actions. As a Calvinistic argument it is extremely fallacious: yet it is important because it shows the constant tendency of Calvinists to leave their position, and adopt one-half of the Arminian's.

(4) Another objection against the solution which we are considering, is that it makes a radical antagonism between God and Jesus Christ. As we have seen, President Dabney claims that God has never purposed nor promised to save the non-elect. He is an earnest

[2] Pages 35, 52, 53, 55.

advocate of the divine sincerity in the expressions of compassion; but he always maintains "that an immutable and sovereign God never had but one will (one purpose or volition) as to this lost man; as a faithful God would never publish any other volition than the one he entertained, but that it was entirely consistent for God to compassionate where he never purposed nor promised to save, because this sincere compassion was restrained within the limits God announced by his own wisdom." Granting this—for the sake of the argument—I affirm that Jesus Christ went far beyond it, teaching that so far as his purpose or will was concerned it was thwarted by the unbelief of men. Although the truth is quite prominently revealed in the Gospels, yet perhaps it is most impressively taught in the Lamentation of Jesus over Jerusalem. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not" (Matt. xxiii. 37). It is true, Dr. Dabney not only notices this passage but also shows the absurdities of many Calvinistic interpretations: but while this is justly admired by all Arminians, they can not escape the conviction that the new solution makes the Father and the Son antagonistic. Beyond all controversy the tears which Jesus shed upon this occasion were the outward manifestation of sincere pity. Had the Saviour remained silent, so far forth as this scene is concerned, Dr. Dabney's position might be correct. But such was not the fact. The Master spoke, declaring that his intention would have resulted in their salvation had they not prevented. Beyond all

dispute, this event reveals the wicked intention, purpose or will of the Jews as opposing and thwarting the intention, purpose or will of the Saviour. Thus says Neander, "The earnest exclamation of Christ, recorded in Luke xiii. 34, Matt. xxiii. 37, distinctly implies that he had *often* endeavored, by his personal teaching in Jerusalem, to rouse the people to repentance and conversion that they might be saved from the ruin then impending over them." [3]

Dr. Dabney truly says: "It is our happiness to believe that when we see Jesus weeping over lost Jerusalem, we 'have seen the Father'; we have received an insight into the divine benevolence and pity." No less truly do the words of Jesus reveal the Father's purpose or volition to save, thwarted by the perversity of determined sinners. In a different sense from that meant by Dr. Dabney do I quote his words, saying: "Some better solution must be found, then, of this wondrous and blessed paradox, of omnipotent love lamenting those whom yet it did not save." [4] Unless Dr. Dabney can purify his solution of the four objections which are now before the reader, that which he rejects as Pelagian—"freewill"—is yet to be triumphant.

Concerning the will of God I ask, in the words of Dr. Dabney, "Why not let the Scriptures mean what they so plainly strive to declare?" In them the will of God is revealed in two different aspects, namely, the actual and the ideal. The ideal will of God is the unconditioned expression of his sincere desires. It is that which he wishes to do, and would accomplish

[3] "Life of Christ," p. 157.

[4] p. 61.

were he not prevented by some exterior cause or causes. Thus it is God's will, volition, or purpose, ideally expressed, that the wicked should not perish, but that all should come to repentance. For this goal he strives with all the influences at his command. Yet infallibly knowing who will yield to the influences of the Holy Spirit, his actual will, purpose, or volition, is completely realized in the salvation of all true believers. Hence, the atonement, is—in one sense—limited, but the limitation is manward instead of Godward. As has been admirably said by Dr. John Miley: "Nothing respecting the atonement is more certain than the real conditionality of its saving grace. Hence, it is a mere assumption that the atonement is necessarily saving, and, therefore, that the actual saving is the extent of it. . . . . With an atonement in vicarious suffering sufficient for all, but really conditional in the saving result, its universality is in full logical accord with a limited actual salvation. . . . . Hence, eternal destinies are determined according as the gospel is received or rejected." [5]

At this stage of the discussion—while in the full light of the atoning love of the Lord Jesus Christ—it is proper to notice the recent theological movement among evangelical Congregationalists. It is variously designated. Opponents have called it "The Andover Controversy," "The New Departure." For conven-

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5 "The Atonement In Christ," pp. 320, 324, 326. "There is but one explanation of the helpless position and ethical poverty of newborn man, and of his subjection to the law of gradual development, to-wit: that over him and his being, neither divine omnipotence nor divine love holds undivided sway, but his own freedom is a co-operative factor, and his own acts condition both the operations and communications of God" Dorner. "Bib. Sacra," 1879, p. 54.

ience its friends have adopted the term "New Theology," or have described it as a "Renaissance." It has two important features—the positive and the negative. It believes and therefore speaks. It doubts, and therefore questions. Hence its relative strength and weakness. Its affirmations are not new. As has been said by an able advocate, "they prevailed in the first centuries of the church, while the stream ran clear from the near fountain, and they have appeared all along in individual minds and schools, as the higher peaks of a mountain range catch the sunshine, while the base is enveloped in mist and shadow—not many, and often far separate, but enough to show the trend and to bear witness to the light." [6]

Hence the "New Theology" is a strong protest against, and a radical abandonment of Calvinism. In some important respects it affiliates with Arminianism. The chief antagonisms with the latter are in its principles of Eschatology, which, while drawn from various sources may be more directly traced to Dr. Dorner. He teaches that salvation is conditioned on the personal acceptance of the Saviour. All human beings of whatever age or condition – who have not exercised a *bona fide* determination for or against the historic Christ, will have this opportunity in the future life. This acceptance or rejection—before or after death—is necessary to decide the eternal destiny of the soul. [7]

What that destiny will be, is not affirmed by Dorner nor by his American allies. He concedes that "the exegetical grounds for the statement that some will be forever lost, are indeed preponderant." In his

[6] Rev. T. T. Munger. "The Freedom of Faith," p. 3.

[7] See "System of Christian Doctrine," Vol. IV., pp. 409, 412.

"Orthodox theology of To-Day," Dr. Newman Smyth says the Scriptures "hold up no promise of the hereafter to any man who here and now determines himself against the Spirit of Christ." Answering some questions propounded by members of the Ecclesiastical Council at New Haven, Sept. 20, 1882, he said, "There is nothing definite in the Scripture with regard to a possible future probation." Consequently, so far as the "New Theology" postulates a future probation, it finds its justification in the moral axiom that a fair or "decisive probation" is the condition of a divine condemnation; and from a few obscure passages of Scripture, notably 1. Pet. iii. 19, 20, and iv. 6. But it is by no means certain that Peter teaches this doctrine. Scholars of equal piety and learning do not agree. Each side may justly claim a large number of distinguished exegetes. But granting all that may be fairly claimed by the advocates of a future probation, their position is Scripturally untenable; the most that can be claimed from these passages is that Christ preached the gospel of salvation to all who lived before his advent. As we know nothing of the reasons for the supposed proclamation; as there is not the least hint that the alleged mercy is extended to any who have lived under the Christian Dispensation, the limits of the discussion are greatly circumscribed. But this is not the end of the matter. The Scriptural argument is not simply negative. The Word of God knows no future probation for any who have lived since the birth of the Christian Church. The many promises and warnings presuppose and assert that our eternal destiny is determined by our earthly character. Delitzsch has well said, "If this pædagogic form of

world be destroyed, man is, and remains, that which he has become within himself. He is, and remains; he is not annihilated; for Scripture no more teaches the final annihilation of the wicked than it does their *apokatastasis* or restoration. Human reason would like in one way or another to abolish the dualism with which the history of the world closes. Let her do it upon her own responsibility, but let her not falsify the Scripture. This teaches an eternal personal continuance of all personal beings, and a continuance fundamentally conditioned by what they have become in time." [8]

Hence, so far as a fair probation is the condition of final destiny, the Scripture's predicate it to the race. Here then, is the crucial question, What is a fair or decisive probation? Dorner's definition is untenable because its legitimate conclusions are contradicted by the Word. As against Calvinism, he is right in maintaining that each soul will be treated justly, yea, according to the yearnings of infinite Love. The idea of a probation has no place in the Reformed Theology. Extremes meet. One unduly exalts, and the other denies probation. The Scriptural idea of probation involves (1) Sufficient intelligence to distinguish between right and wrong. (2) Ample power to choose the right and reject the wrong. So far as a personal acceptance of Jesus Christ is necessary to salvation, there is another element in probation, namely, (3) Sufficient knowledge of his atoning love as to justify a faith in him.

Wherever this last condition does not exist a personal acceptance of the Saviour is not necessary to sal-

[8] "System of Biblical Psychology," p. 554.

vation. "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed?" and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?" "Then Peter opened his mouth and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is accepted with him" (Acts x. 34, 35). "For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves; which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing, or else excusing, one another" (Rom. ii. 14, 15). In all ages there has been a spirit of faith in God which has been graciously counted for righteousness. The light may have been dim, the faith very imperfect; but the loving Father saw the spirit of receptivity, knew the inner strivings after a nobler life and the prompt yielding to the Spirit's influences: hence every responsible being has a fair probation. God knows all the conditions of each soul. He has an infinite understanding of the surroundings, the inherited tendencies, the hopes and fears, the love and hate by which each character is formed, and therefore, unerringly judges in accordance with eternal right and infinite love.

Let it not be said that this view undervalues the atoning work of the Lord Jesus Christ. On the contrary it exalts him and his work by postulating the

atonement as the basis of God's dealings with the race.

According to Arminian principles the divine promise of a Saviour was the condition of race propagation. Hence, the universality of the Holy Spirit's work. The Old Testament saints were enlightened and guided by his influences. The divine promise on which they relied (Heb. xi. 13) were fulfilled in Christ. They were saved through a prospective Saviour, while we are saved through the historic Saviour.

So far, there is no need for affirming a future probation : hence the second phase of the subject refers to irresponsible adults and dying infants. Both classes are in the same moral condition of irresponsibility. As members of the human race they are indeed subject to those physical and psychological laws by which man exists. Their moral natures are disorganized : they have sinward tendencies, which in the responsible, result in a free determination to evil : but as moral responsibility is the fundamental condition of sin, they are not and can not be justly called sinners. Sin is an impossibility without a free choice with power to the contrary. Of course this proposition is applicable only to those who have never deprived themselves of this power by previous sinning.

These fundamental principles clearly understood, it is legitimate to affirm the salvation of all dying infants and irresponsible adults. True, the question is speculative ; but as it is not condemned by Scripture its admissiblity can not be denied. The Master's allusions to and gracious reception of little children confirm the hypothesis. The mode by which salva-

tion is bestowed is also speculative. Excluding all theories of baptismal regeneration, the following are the principal suppositions: (1) All dying infants become moral agents after death. Exercising a holy choice they "are saved on the ground of the atonement and by regeneration." This seems to be the prevailing view of Congregationalists. Prof. Joseph Cook says, "As they have not learned the evils of sin, it is to be hoped that in death at the sight of God's face, they will acquire entire harmony of soul with him."[9] Prof. G. F. Wright, D. D., says, ". . . . our general confidence in God's abounding mercy leads us to believe that he secures their development under such circumstances that they will be saved."[1] Doubtless this is substantially the view of Prof. Egbert C. Smyth: but he disagrees with Mr. Cook in affirming that it necessarily involves a future probation. (2) All dying infants are regenerated by the Holy Spirit. This is the Presbyterian doctrine. The Westminster Confession of Faith says, "Elect infants, dying in infancy, are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit, who worketh when, and where, and how he pleaseth. So also are all other elect persons, who are incapable of being outwardly called by the ministry of the word." (3) All infants enter the world justified and therefore saved. This is the view which has most prevailed in the Methodist Episcopal Church, although not a few of its members accept the second theory. Leading Arminians, including Wesley, Fletcher and Fisk have earnestly maintained that so far as infant justification or regeneration exists, it "is

9 "New Departures in and from Orthodoxy."

1 "Bib. Sac.," 1874, p. 545.

not congenital, but post-genital." The position is ably stated by Dr. D. D. Whedon. "The born individual, thereby, though not judicially condemned, is displacent, and, as unholy, is offensive to God; and so the reconciliation of that displacency, in order that God's face may shine upon him, is a blood-bought grace. That unholiness is so expiated, and that divine displacency is, through Christ's sole merits, so propitiated, that the infant's actual guiltlessness may be divinely recognized and held by God available for his justification as truly as that unreal, but virtual, guiltlessness of the adult procured through pardon. He thereby stands in the same essential gracious position as the forgiven and justified adult. No justice, human or divine, can indeed pardon the guiltless, just because there is nothing to pardon. But pardon and declaratory justification are two things. Christ, by his self-oblation, is entitled, as our Advocate, to declare the infant's justification, unworthy though he be through his sinward nature, against all who would lay charge against him. 'Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth,' just because 'it is Christ that died.' And thus being justified and reconciled, the infant becomes fit subject for the gracious influence of the Spirit that cures that sinwardness and regenerates the nature; so that (whether we use the term regenerate or not) the infant is in the same essential condition as that into which the justified and regenerate adult is brought by voluntary faith."[2]

The conception is beautiful and logically self-con-

[2] "Methodist Quarterly Review," 1883, p. 757. See also the same Review for 1873, p. 131.

sistent. Its advocates are not so presumptuous as to think there are no objections. On the contrary adverse arguments have been fairly considered, and, in their opinion, satisfactorily answered. I shall not attempt to decide the question. My purpose is realized if I have shown that the salvation of dying infants and irresponsible adults does not necessarily demand a future probation.[3]

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[3] For an admirable presentation of the adequacy of man's present probation see Whedon's "Will." Chap. XI. "Equation of Probational Advantages." The general subject is also discussed in "Bib. Sacra," 1881, p. 622, "Is Salvation Possible without a Knowledge of the Gospel?" and in "The New Englander," 1882, p. 751, "Provision and Method of Salvation."

## CHAPTER II.

### Calvinism Teaches Infant Damnation.

"I am not aware that any intelligent Christian can be found who maintains the unauthorized and appalling position that infant children, who are not guilty of any actual sin, either outwardly or inwardly, will be doomed to misery in the world to come.

"On this particular point our opinions have been often misrepresented. We are said to hold that God dooms a whole race of innocent creatures to destruction, or considers them all deserving of destruction, for the sin of one man. Now, when I examine the writings of the earlier Calvinists generally on the subject of original sin, I find nothing which resembles such a statement as this."—*Rev. Leonard Woods, D. D.*

## CHAPTER II.

### Calvinism Teaches Infant Damnation.

This is not to be affirmed of modern Calvinists. Without exception this doctrine is now denied by all the followers of Calvin, whether in the Presbyterian, the Congregational, or the Baptist Churches. Hence were it not that the Confession of Faith—which does teach the doctrine—is still accepted as the true exponent of Calvinistic theology; and especially were it not that this fact has been and is denied by Calvinistic theologians the reader would have been spared this chapter. The subject is important not only because it involves a correct understanding of history, but also because it enables the reader to judge more intelligently of the merits of the system under discussion.

### SECTION I.

### *Does the Westminster Confession of Faith Teach Infant Damnation?*

This issue was forced upon the Arminian. His statements of history are constantly denied by eminent Calvinists. Thus Dr. N. L. Rice, after having quoted the clause from the Confession which relates to this subject, says: "It is certain that Presbyterians have never understood this language as teaching the doctrine of infant damnation. Persons have often asserted that they had heard the doctrine preached, but

on particular inquiry it has been found that their statements were either maliciously false, or were inferences of their own from what the preacher said. But no respectable Presbyterian writer can be found, either in ancient or modern times, who has taught that any dying in infancy are lost. . . . . The doctrine of Infant Damnation was charged upon the Presbyterian Church by Alexander Campbell, in a public debate with the author of these pages. In reply we said: 'I am truly gratified that the gentleman has brought forward the charge against us, of holding the doctrine of the damnation of infants; because it is believed by many who are unacquainted with our views.' He says, our Confession of Faith teaches this doctrine. This is not correct. It is true that it speaks of elect infants,—'Elect infants dying in infancy are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit.' Are all infants, dying in infancy, elect? All Presbyterians who express an opinion on the subject, so believe. The expression, 'elect infants,' the gentleman seems to think, implies non-elect infants; but I call upon him to produce one respectable Presbyterian author who has expressed the opinion that, 'infants dying in infancy are lost.' . . . . In answer to this demand, repeatedly made, Mr. Campbell quoted one or two passages from the writings of Calvin and one from Turretine, in which those great and good men opposed the doctrine of the Pelagians and Socinians, who hold that Adam's sin did not affect his posterity, and that men are not born in Original sin; and in which they affirmed that all Adam's posterity are exposed to eternal death, and might justly have been left to perish. But neither of them taught that any infant is, in fact,

lost. They simply taught that the salvation of all, infants as well as adults, is of grace, not of justice." [1]

Professor David Swing in his "Truths of To-Day," speaks of this and kindred doctrines as follows: "All those formulas which looked toward a dark fatalism, or which destroyed the human will, or indicate the damnation of some infants, or that God, for his own glory, foreordained a vast majority of the race to everlasting death. . . . . I have declared to them that the Presbyterian Church had left behind these doctrines, and that her religion was simply Evangelical, and not par excellence the religion of despair." To this the editors of "The Presbyterian Quarterly" of 1874, replied, "The class of articles here caricatured and rejected, teach none of the things thus charged upon them, although it is common for adversaries thus to reproach them. Nor have these things been held more by the Presbyterian Church of the past than of the present." [2] To the same effect speaks Dr. Charles Hodge. Dr. Krauth in his work on "The Conservative Reformation and its Theology," made some statements concerning the Westminster Confession of Faith and infant salvation. Dr. Hodge replies, "We are sorry to see that Dr. Krauth labors to prove that the Westminster Confession teaches that only a certain part, or some of those who die in infancy are saved; this he does by putting his own construction on the language of that Confession. We can only say that we never saw a Calvinistic theologian who held that doctrine. We are not learned enough to venture the assertion that no Calvinist ever held it; but if all

[1] "God Sovereign and Man Free," pp. 120, 121.

[2] p. 518.

Calvinists are responsible for what every Calvinist has ever said, and all Lutherans for everything Luther or Lutherans have ever said, then Dr. Krauth as well as ourselves will have a heavy burden to carry." [3]

That the meaning of Dr. Hodge may be more clearly understood, let me recall the readers' attention to one sentence—the only proof given against the conclusion of Dr. Krauth, viz., "We can only say that we never saw a Calvinistic theologian who held that doctrine." By this Dr. Hodge must mean one of two things, or both: viz., (1) That he never personally saw a Calvinistic theologian who held the doctrine; or (2) That he never saw the doctrine in the writings of any Calvinistic theologian. But if he means to prove that the Confession of Faith does not teach infant condemnation because he never saw a theologian who held that doctrine, it amounts to nothing, for the simple reason it proves too much. By the same kind of argument I can prove that no one has ever held the Ptolemaic theory of astronomy. On this kind of reasoning numberless absurdities may be safely promulgated.

On the other hand, if Dr. Hodge means he has never seen this doctrine in the writings of any Calvinistic theologian, it proves nothing to the point. Before the assertion can prove anything favorable to the Confession, Dr. Hodge must be able to say that he has very carefully read the writings of every Calvinistic theologian before, and contemporary with the Westminister Assembly. This, however, is the very thing he has not done: hence the weakness of his position. He charges Dr. Krauth with "putting his

[3] "Systematic Theology," Vol. III., p. 605: note.

own construction on the language of the Confession." Is Dr. Hodge innocent of the same charge?

In this chapter I shall endeavor to find the true answer to the question, Does Calvinism, through the Westminister Confession of Faith, teach Infant Condemnation?

## SECTION II.

### *No Proof that Only Elect Infants Die.*

As we have seen, Dr. Rice and Dr. Hodge claim that infants who die are of the elect: hence, of course, there can be no infant condemnation. But where is the proof of this? Let us see if it is in the Confession. "God from all eternity did by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass; yet so as thereby neither is God the author of sin; nor is violence offered to the will of the creatures, nor is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established. Although God knows whatsoever may or can come to pass, upon all supposed condition; yet hath he not decreed anything because he foresaw it as future, or as that which would come to pass, upon such conditions. By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others foreordained to everlasting death." [1]

From these declarations three legitimate deductions irresistibly follow: viz., (1) There are persons foreordained to eternal condemnation irrespective of their foreseen rejection of Christ. (2) All these per-

[1] Pages 25, 26, 27.

sons have been infants: hence (3) There are non-elect infants. Now one of two things must be true. (*a*) None of the non-elect infants die, and so live beyond the age of infancy, and then die, and are everlastingly condemned: or (*b*) Some non-elect infants die in infancy, and are eternally condemned. If none of the non-elect infants die in infancy, I ask for the proof. It is not in the Scriptures, nor does the Confession pretend to give any Scripture bearing on this point. The only passages given are Luke xviii. 15, 16, and Acts ii. 38, 39. The former reads as follows: "And they brought unto him also infants, that he would touch them; but when his disciples saw it, they rebuked them. But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God." Observe, it says "little children." It makes no distinction: hence all little children are included. So far as the words and actions of the Saviour are concerned, they embrace the non-elect, as well as the elect infants. Not a hint is given regarding the non-elect infants dying or not dying, and therefore, to interpret the Master's words as teaching that only elect infants die, is a clear begging of the question.

The passage in Acts is, "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."

This has no reference to the question in dispute. It simply mentions the children of believers and those

afar off. It says not a word even indirectly concerning the death of any person, much less elect or non-elect infants. Hence, if the Confession has no proof, either in itself or from Scripture, affirming that only elect infants die, then so far as the present question is concerned there is no proof and the assumption is wholly groundless. But the eternal condemnation of infants is so very repugnant to our moral nature that many Calvinists declare the Confession must be interpreted in favor of all dying infants. This moral repugnance however, is soon seen to be narrow; for is it any worse for God to condemn dying infants, than it is to condemn persons before they were born, and hence as innocent as the infants? There is not a particle of difference. Both classes are condemned at the same time, even from all eternity. Therefore this intense moral repugnance, which but a moment ago was in favor of the Calvinist, now recoils with a strong force against this same Calvinist, and says The eternal condemnation of any one irrespective of a foreseen rejection of saving truth is a horrible libel on God's character.

Moreover, what a curious position is necessitated by this assumption that only elect infants die! If the death of an infant is the certain indication of election, then it is possible for man to secure the election of every infant now in existence. Beyond all reasonable doubt there are infants now living, of whom it may be said, They are of the non-elect: Yet their destiny which has been decreed of God from all eternity can be reversed by a single act of man. To say this is not susceptible of demonstration is to affirm the exact condition of the Calvinistic postulate "all dying infants are of the

elect." Unquestionably among the abandoned classes of society are many dying infants, who, were they to live, would become dissolute and hardened characters.

## SECTION III.

### *Infant Condemnation was Taught Prior to the Westminster Assembly.*

Augustine taught "That infants dying without baptism, will on account of their imputed sin be in the mildest punishment." [2]

Friar Berthold says, "If your children die without baptism or are baptized improperly, they can never enter into the heavenly joys. They go, together with the Jewish and Gentile children who are still without belief, to the limbus to which those of old went. There they do not suffer any pain, except this that they do not go to heaven." [3]

Thomas Aquinas says, "Children who die without baptism have not that hope of eternal salvation which the fathers had prior to the manifestation of Christ." [4] Zanchius affirms, "Infants are deservedly damned on account of the nature they have, to wit, a wicked nature, repugnant to the laws of God." [5]

We now come to John Calvin. Let us see how he and Dr. Rice agree. "Moreover, infants who are to be saved (and that some are saved at this age is certain), must, without question, be previously regenerated by the Lord." "I again ask how it is that the fall of Adam involves so many nations with their infant

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[2] Prof. E. A. Park, D. D. "Bib. Sacra," 1851.
[3] Hagenbach's "Hist. of Doc." Vol. II., p. 131.
[4] Ibid.
[5] "Methodist Quarterly Review," 1873, p. 443.

children in eternal death without remedy, unless that it so seemed meet to God?"[6]

Peter Martyr says: "Neither must it be thought that I would promise salvation unto all the children of the faithful which depart without the sacrament. . . . . I dare not promise certain salvation, particularly unto any that departeth hence. For there be some children of the saints which belong not unto predestination."[7]

The Synod of Dort met on the 13th day of November, 1618, to oppose Arminianism. Its members were strongly Calvinistic, and as Calvin had taught infant condemnation, they would naturally do the same. H. Alting who was a member of the Synod replies to, and repels the charge, and here I quote: "Third, that we hold and teach the salvation of all infants indiscriminately, who die without baptism. No truly orthodox theologian has ever said or written this. Neither Zwingle nor Calvin, nor any other of like note has so taught."[8] Mr. Alting was a learned divine and as far as we know an honest man. From him we learn what was the orthodox opinion on this subject and hence if the Synod of Dort did not teach infant condemnation, so far forth it was heterodox. But the charge of heresy has never been raised against this Synod, and therefore it is more than probable that it taught infant condemnation. The Synod officially declared, "Of the infants of believers only, who die of an age before they can be indoctrinated, we determine that they are saved."[9]

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6 "Institutes." B. IV., Ch. XVI., Sec. 17, and Ch. XXIII., Sec. 7.
7 "Methodist Quarterly Review," July, 1873, p. 444.
8 "Theologia Elenchtica," p. 377. As quoted in "Methodist Quarterly Review," 1873, p. 444.
9 "Acta Dordrechtana," p. 58. As quoted in "Methodist Quarterly Review," 1873, p. 442.

SECTION IV.

*Infant Condemnation Taught by the Westminster Assembly.*

To a large degree the Assembly was composed of pronounced Calvinists. It met in 1643, only twenty-five years after the Synod of Dort. Its doctrines were similar to those of Dort. Dr. Shedd says: "The system of Doctrine constructed by this Assembly is thoroughly Calvinistic, and bears a close resemblance to the canons of the Synod of Dort." [1] But there is a vast difference between a belief in the condemnation of some infants and a belief in the salvation of all infants. Hence it is highly probable that the Assembly believed in infant condemnation unless it emphatically stated the contrary. There is no such statement on record. If the Assembly believed in infant condemnation it is highly probable that it testified concerning that belief; for (1) They were honest men. (2) They possessed strong convictions. (3) The occasion was important. (4) Every member was obliged to take the following oath: "I ——, do seriously promise and vow in the presence of Almighty God, that in this Assembly, whereof I am a member, I will maintain nothing in point of doctrine but what I believe to be the most agreeable to the Word of God; nor in point of discipline, but what I shall conceive to conduce most to the glory of God and the good and peace of his church." [2]

The only record we have from this representative body of divines on the subject under discussion is,

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1 "History of Doctrine." Vol. II., p. 480.

2 Hetherington. "History of West. Assembly," p. 101.

"Elect infants, dying in infancy, are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit, who worketh when, and where, and how he pleaseth."[3] It is very probable that this was meant to teach infant condemnation; for (1) The doctrine was held by Dr. Twisse, the first Prolocutor of the Assembly. He taught that "Many thousands, even all the infants of Turks and Saracens dying in original sin, are tormented by him in hell-fire"[4]

(2) If the declaration of the Confession was not intended to teach infant condemnation it must have been so understood, not only by those attending, but also by all who were contemporary with the Assembly. If it had been interpreted as teaching the salvation of all dying infants it would have been condemned by many Calvinists such as Dr. Twisse and highly applauded by many Arminians. But so far as history records the events of this period such a condemnation, or approbation was never in existence. (3) If the passage in question does not teach infant condemnation those who composed it were either dishonest or very ignorant. Beyond all controversy the Assembly made and left the impression that the doctrine of infant condemnation was the teaching of Scripture. As we have seen the members were honest. Hence their words are extremely ambiguous, or else they intended to teach the doctrine. But they were too intelligent to be guilty of such ambiguity, for, as Baxter says, "The divines there congregated were men of eminent learning and goodness, and ministerial ability and

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[3] Confession," p. 68.

[4] "Vindiciæ Grat. Protest. et Prov. Dei." "Methodist Quarterly Review," 1873, p. 443.

fidelity ; and, as far as I am able to judge, the Christian world since the days of the Apostles had never seen a synod of more excellent men than this Synod and the Synod of Dort." [5]

"Hallam admits that they were equal in learning, good sense, and other merits to any Lower House of Convocation that ever made figure in England." [6] Then if the members of the Assembly were not dishonest nor ignorant, they meant to and did declare that which they actually believed. Hence the passage in question is a part of the Calvinistic theology of the Seventeenth Century, and as thus related unequivocally teaches infant condemnation.

## SECTION V.

### *The Doctrine More or Less Distinctly Taught Since the Westminster Assembly.*

The few extracts which I have selected for this section will appropriately form the conclusion to the subject and also enable the reader to see how accurately our Calvinistic theologians have interpreted history. The following is from the celebrated poet and theologian Dr. Isaac Watts: "But whereas Dr. Ridgley supposes the immortal existence of such infant souls in a sort of stupid ignorance or insensibility, which the Scripture nowhere intimates, I think it is much more natural and reasonable to suppose that God will deprive both body and soul of life which Adam had forfeited for himself and for them according to the first threatening of death. And since the book of Script-

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5 "Methodist Quarterly Review," 1848, p. 585.

6 "Presbyterian Review," 1874, p. 732.

ure has not revealed it, I can not find it in the book of reason; nor can I conceive what end it can attain in divine providence, to continue so many millions of infant souls in an eternal state of stupor. Is it agreeable to the conduct of infinite wisdom, and the government of God, to maintain such an innumerable multitude of idiots equal in number to almost all the rest of the human race, in a long, endless duration, and to reign over such an immense nation of senseless and thoughtless immortals? . . . . Upon the whole, therefore, the state of non-existence to which we here suppose them to be reduced after death, is much more probable, being the least demerit of imputed sin, or an everlasting forfeiture of life, and a sort of endless punishment without pain." The difference between children of pious and non-pious parents is clearly drawn in the following: "I add in the last place, that if all children dying in infancy, are certainly saved, what are the special privileges which are so often asserted in Scripture to belong to the children of pious parents and the seed of Abraham, in having God to be their God?" [8]

Dr. Nathanael Emmons says of God, "He has not been pleased to inform us expressly whether he does renew the hearts of a whole, or a part, or none of those little children who die soon after they become moral agents. As they then become morally depraved, it is plain, that in point of justice, he may then leave them all to perish in their native depravity and guilt. Or in mercy he may renew them all. But from all the light we can find in Scripture on this subject, it seems to be the most probable opinion that he renews

[8] "Works." Vol. III., pp. 497, 502.

only some of those who die soon after they become morally depraved and guilty." Before these remarks can be thoroughly understood we must know at what age Dr. Emmons predicated moral agency. Concerning this, the editor of Dr. Emmon's works, Dr. Ide, say, "His own belief is as clearly expressed in the body of the discourse that they become moral agents as soon as they become natural agents." [9]

Dr. E. D. Griffin is not quite so positive. "Justice therefore approved of the actual destruction of a whole race that were to be born infants. They meet a condemnation at the threshold of their existence. Their just doom in the cradle is, that first or last they shall sink to perdition. And this doom would have been just had no Saviour been provided. . . . . A large part of the race die in infancy and go to heaven or hell. If to the latter, (which for certain reasons I hope is not the case,) then they justly perish; if to the former, then they are saved by grace and by Christ, and therefore might justly have been consigned to death." [1]

In an article written some years since for "The Interior," Professor W. M. Blackburn, D. D., frankly admits the validity of my position, he says, "By the words 'covenant' and 'elect' the Westminster Assembly meant to run a line through the adult world. While thus applying those terms to adults, they debate about the 'elect of infants,' and the same line was evidently run through the class of dying infants. The 'elect infants' are those within the covenant of redemption." [2]

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[9] "Works." Vol. II., pp. 626, 625.

[1] "Divine Efficiency," pp. 69, 70.

[2] See also the testimony of Dr. G. L. Prentiss. "Presbyterian Review," July, 1883.

In concluding this subject I doubt not the candid reader will readily see whose construction I have placed upon the Confession of Faith. It is neither Dr. Krauth's, Dr. Hodge's nor mine. It is the construction of the members of the Westminster Assembly, and as such, is entitled to our implicit confidence.

That the issue should have terminated so overwhelmingly against these honored divines is no fault of mine. I have simply quoted facts which for some unaccountable reason they thought best to deny. Since the above was written I have examined the recent work by Dr. Charles Briggs. He says, "We are able to say that the Westminster divines were unanimous on this question of the salvation of elect infants only. We have examined the greater part of the writings of the Westminster divines, and have not been able to find any different opinion from the extracts given. The Presbyterian churches have departed from their standards on this question and it is simple honesty to acknowledge it. We are at liberty to amend the Confession, but we have no right to distort it and to pervert its grammatical and historical meaning." [3]

[3] "Whither?" p. 135

## CHAPTER III.

### Calvinism Contradicts the Bible by Declaring Saving Faith to be a Direct Gift of God.

"In order that Christ may do anything for a man, he everywhere prescribes an absolutely necessary condition. This condition is faith. Christ always says: 'If you would be saved by me, you must believe me.' . . . . So always between all that Christ can do and longs to do for men and the men themselves rises this inevitable and rocky condition, faith. . . . . Christ respects a man's free volition. Faith is that movement of the soul through which it passes into surrender to him and seizure of him. Faith is the appropriating faculty. Without faith, nothing in religion is possible; with faith, everything is possible, because by faith the soul allows the incoming and the energy of the saving Christ."

—*Rev. Wayland Hoyt, D. D.*

## CHAPTER III.

### Calvinism Contradicts the Bible by Declaring Saving Faith to be a Direct Gift of God.

Having considered the Atonement as the foundation of God's universal offer of mercy, it is now in order to turn our attention to that which secures to the individual, the blessings of Christ's death, namely, Saving Faith.

### SECTION I.

*Calvinism Declares that Faith is Not a Condition of Salvation.*

This affirmation is emphatically denied by some Calvinists among whom is the Rev. Robert Aikman, D. D. In his article "The Position of Calvinism," he says: "Now the decrees of salvation are unconditional as being the self-originated, independent purposes of the divine mind, but the salvation which is decreed is a salvation whose conditions are faith, repentance and love. . . . . There are none who endeavor more fully to proclaim the conditions of salvation than we do." [1]

The whole subject depends on the question, What is meant by the term "conditions"? Evidently by it Dr. Aikman means one thing, while Arminians mean something totally different. Dr. Aikman prob-

[1] "Methodist Quarterly Review," 1873, p. 317.

ably means that as long as faith, repentance and love are not exercised by the individual, salvation is not bestowed. True, this may be a condition in a certain restricted sense: but as thus understood, the source of the given condition is never sought. Or in other words, according to Calvinism God's election to salvation is orderly; the elect are not separated from the non-elect until God gives them repentance, faith and love. These graces are the outward conditions or occasions of the secret, irresistible love of God. He makes the universal promise to save all who will believe, and in the elect he fulfills the condition by giving them repentance, faith and love; as a consequence they are known as among the redeemed. This is a distinction without a valid difference, for if the divine, irresistible grace makes good the conditions, the individual has not performed them, and hence, salvation is really unconditional. That this is all the conditionality of salvation allowed by Calvinism, I shall now attempt to prove.

In chapter second of Part First I discussed at length the question "Are God's Decrees Conditional or Unconditional"? I there made it clear that every Calvinistic writer from Augustine to Dr. Charles Hodge had taught that the decrees were unconditional. Inasmuch therefore as salvation is an essential part of the decrees, and especially as Dr. Dabney has informed us that the decrees are one, the conclusion is irresistible that salvation is unconditional. But it may be profitable to notice what a few of these writers say concerning faith, repentence and love as conditions of salvation. John Sladen taught "Faith and repentance are not the conditions of God's decreeing salva-

tion to any, but the qualifications of the persons whom God has absolutely decreed to save." Andrew Fuller says: "The Calvinistic doctrine of predestination supposes that holiness of heart and life are as much the object of divine appointment as future happiness, and that the connection can never be broken." The following from Dr. Griffin clearly shows that I have correctly defined what Calvinists mean by "condition." "Faith (the condition of salvation) and holiness generally, instead of being independent acts of the creature under the persuasions of the Spirit, are the gift of God." The following is from Dr. John Dick and admirably sets forth both views. "I remark once more that the decrees of God are absolute and unconditional. . . . . Here we have many opponents, Lutherans, Arminians, Jesuits. . . . . When he decreed to save those who should believe, he decreed to give them faith. . . . . That any decree is conditional in the sense of our opponents, that it depends upon the will of man, of which he is sovereign, so that he may will or not will as he pleases, we deny." Dr. George Duffield declares "New School Presbyterians do not affirm that faith foreseen is the condition with God for his decree of election." Dr. Venema says, "The act of the decree is absolute; not uncertain or doubtful. It is not suspended on any condition on the part of man." Moreover, this is precisely what Dr. Aikman believes and has said; for on page 313 of his article from which I have quoted, he gives the view of Dr. N. W. Taylor, "The orthodox doctrine is not that God has purposed to save a part of mankind on condition of foreseen repentence and faith," heartily indorsing it by saying, "If this is 'modified Armin-

ianism ' some of us would be happy to have it pervade all the pulpits of the Methodist Episcopal Church."

Against this view the Arminian strongly protests. He affirms that God has made provision for the salvation of all; has promised to save all who will repent of their sins and exercise faith in his only begotten Son: that this condition must be fulfilled by each individual under the influences of the Holy Spirit. This being man's duty, God can not save unless it has been performed; hence so far forth as man will not believe, will not exercise faith in the Saviour, to that same degree is the desire of God thwarted. Were all men to meet the required condition, the ideal plan of God would become the actual. Having thus briefly outlined the contents of this chapter, I shall attempt to show that this is the teaching of Scripture.

## SECTION II.

### *The Importance of Faith.*

On this subject the words of Dr. Charles Hodge are admirable: he says, "As so much prominence is assigned to faith in the Scriptures, as all the promises of God are addressed to believers, and as all the conscious exercises of spiritual life involve the exercise of faith, without which they are impossible, the importance of this grace can not be overestimated. To the theologian and to the practical Christian it is indispensable that clear and correct views should be entertained on the subject."[2] As a race of responsible creatures, man is hopelessly lost in sin without divine intervention. Having an infinite love for all his chil-

[2] "Theology." Vol. III., p. 41.

dren, God sincerely desires their reclamation. But how shall this be accomplished? To man the problem is indeed insolvable. He sees at a glance that force is not adequate; that spirit can not be governed by the laws and regulations of matter; that a moral or spiritual power is absolutely needed which shall at once free the soul from the dominion of sin and re-inspire the heart with new hope. Beyond this his mind can not go, and in the agony of despair, the sinful soul frequently cries out, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" But God, whose ways are past finding out, is wiser than man. In the divine counsels two principles were to be employed which should secure that for which the sages and philanthropists had vainly striven; viz., (1) The Incarnation of Absolute Truth. God is truth, and hence, the human mind—originally created in, and even now bearing to some degree the divine image—was made for truth. Falsehood is the enemy of the race no less than of God. The normal action of the intellect, heart and conscience is to seek for, and repose in truth.

"The mind was formed to mount sublime
Beyond the narrow bounds of time—
To everlasting things."

This, however, it can not do if it is not in sympathy with truth. Nor is it too much to say that its flight upward will be seriously hindered if it lives in the midst of insincerity.

It is much easier to tell men how to live truly than to demonstrate the principles in daily life. Plato, Socrates and Confucius fairly succeeded in the former, but most ignominiously failed in the latter: hence it

has ever been the world's great need that absolute truth should be embodied in a living representative. This we find in Jesus Christ of whom the Baptist said, "He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God; for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him." Speaking of himself the Master declared unto Pilate, "Thou sayest I am a King. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth." Thus it was the life-work of Jesus Christ to teach men "the way, the truth, and the life" by exhibiting these heavenly graces not only in matchless words, but also by that which is infinitely better—a matchless life.

I know there are men like Theodore Parker who question, and at times, deny Christ's faultless character. But the challenge which the Master threw to the unbelieving Jews, "Which of you convicteth me of sin?" has yet to be accepted and overthrown. Had Pilate been more spiritually minded, had he been true to his convictions, he would not have stopped with the words "I find in him no fault," but would have fallen at his feet, exclaiming Thou art the One in whom the dreams of the ages have their realization.

(2) The second principle which God employed was the incarnation of Infinite Love. To be intrinsically true, and to live in accordance with the dictates of truth, constitutes a grand, a noble life; yet it is conceivable that the person thus living so far above his fellows, might have little or no interest in their trials, temptations and failures. That gradually there would grow a wide, and almost impassable chasm between them, resulting in a cold, dignified rectitude in the good, and a mistrust and discouragement in the

bad. Consequently, the small influence possessed by negatively good men. The pattern itself may be true, but lacking the heart element there is no inspiration for those living in the valley of despair. The moon may be very beautiful, but it requires the warm, genial sun to draw the tiny particles of water from their silvery bed in the lake, up to the dizzy heights of the clouds whence they return to freshen and beautify the earth. This is the order of grace no less than of nature. Christ's trueness must not, nay can not be separated from his love for his fellows, and because the two are indissolubly united, men have always gone to him for comfort and refuge. His model life demonstrates the existence of personal virtue. His marvelous condescending and persevering love for those whose hearts are empty and hungry gives birth to a new and all-controlling affection, which prompts fresh hope and strong resolution

But this truth is not seen in all its fullness until we concentrate our gaze on the cross of Calvary. Here we have the crowning testimony of the Master's love, a love so real, so intense, so boundless as to lead him to pray for the forgiveness of his enemies. Here, however, we must not tarry ; for the three prophetic days have expired, and lo, from the cold arms of Death, from the closely guarded sepulchre comes the crucified Saviour. With the power of God at his command what shall he do? Send the pestilence or the earthquake among his enemies? Strike them dead by a flash from heaven? Nay, he commands his disciples —and as we read do we not wonder at the marvelous self-control of Jesus? "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father,

and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you : and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

Well has Xavier sung

"Thou, O my Jesus, thou didst me
Upon the cross embrace ;
For me didst bear the nails and spear
And manifold disgrace.

And griefs and torments numberless,
And sweat of agony,
Yea, death itself; and all for one
That was thine enemy.

Then why, O blessed Jesus Christ
Should I not love thee well ?
Not for the hope of winning heaven,
Nor of escaping hell—

Not with the hope of gaining aught,
Not seeking a reward—
But as thyself hath loved me
O ever loving Lord !

Ev'n so I love thee and will love,
And in thy praise will sing,
Solely because thou art my God
And my eternal King."

The life and death of Jesus Christ not only perfectly satisfy the divine veracity and justice, but they also constitute the mightiest moral power which the wisdom of God could devise. In the light of eighteen Christian centuries we clearly see : (1) That if God is to save the race from the bondage and penalty of sin the conditions or terms of mercy must not cast reproach on his government. (2) The remedy must be within the reach of all. (3) It must go to the root of

the disease, and thus work a thorough cure, and (4) While it shall certainly exclude all spirit of boasting from the redeemed, the remedy must be of such intrinsic worth as to commend it to the judgment and conscience which, if accepted, becomes so far forth a meritorious act. Now I confidently assert that in all this universe there is, and there can be nothing better calculated to secure the divine ideal than that which God has actually devised; viz., Faith—which worketh by Love—in the Lord Jesus Christ. Possibly the reader may say that I am safe in this assertion because believing in God's infinite wisdom, that which he has done is predicated as the wisest. But I assure him, it is in no such spirit of *petitio principii* that I am speaking. Let him examine the subject for himself. Study it in all its relations both to God and man. Discard all thought of what the Divine Mind has done. Let him place himself in imagination at the beginning of human history with a fallen race to save; with the honor of God to sustain, and then let him tell me, if he can, what mightier moral power could have been devised than that which has been employed. For one, I confess that the more I investigate the philosophy of salvation, the more deeply am I impressed with the Divine Wisdom, saying with Paul, "O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out."

The importance of Faith, Scripturally considered, is seen in that (*a*) Without it God can not be pleased. "But without faith it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek

him" (Heb. xi. 6). (*b*) Through Faith the soul secures the remission of sin. "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive the remission of sins" (Acts. x. 43). (*c*) The believer is justified by faith. "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith" (Gal. iii. 24). (*d*) At the same time God is seen to be just. "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God. To declare, I say, at this time, his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom. iii. 25, 26). (*e*) Faith leads to activity. "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone" (Jas. ii. 17).

## SECTION III.

### *The Nature of Faith.*

Faith is of two kinds, viz., Objective and Subjective. The former refers to Jesus Christ and his gospel. He is the object in whom, and his doctrines are the truths in which the individual or subjective faith rests. Hence Paul says, "But before faith came we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterward be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster" (Gal. iii. 23-26). Here the Apostle speaks of a present faith, which at one time was not · but inasmuch as

there was a real and accepted spirit of faith under the Old Dispensation, I understand these words as referring to objective faith. Certainly this idea is clearly taught in Jude, verse 3: "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."

Subjective faith is that belief or trust which is exercised in the objective faith, or in the Saviour. It is usually called faith, saving, or justifying faith. Now let us turn our attention to some definitions of faith, and as we do this, be kind enough to remember the remark of Rev. Joseph Cook, that in all misunderstandings it is wise to go back to definitions.

As I understand it, subjective faith consists of three things, viz., (1) A clear perception of the truth, or the person in whom the subjective faith is to rest. (2) A deep interest in the truth or person. (3) A real commitment of self to this truth or person.

## SECTION IV.

### *The Language of Scripture Presupposes and Asserts that Faith which worketh by Love is a Radical Condition of Salvation.*

Against the Calvinistic doctrine of Monergism the Scriptures clearly teach the doctrine of Synergism. Because (1) We are commanded to love, and to exercise faith in God. "Hear, O Israel, The Lord our God is one Lord. And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might" (Deut. vi. 4, 5). "Trust in

the Lord, and do good: so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed" (Ps. xxxvii. 3). "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding" (Prov. iii. 5). "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God" (Isa. l. 10). "And Jesus, answering, saith unto them, have faith in God" (Mark xi. 22). To the same spiritual purpose are the gospel injunctions concerning faith in Christ. "Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God that ye believe on him whom he hath sent" (John vi. 28, 29). "And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment" (1. John iii. 23).

(2) Salvation is conditioned on the Exercise of Faith. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John iii. 16). "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life" (John vi. 47). "And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (Acts xvi. 31). "For the Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed" (Rom. x. 11). (3) Faith is so much a personal choice that it is said to belong to the individual by whom it is exercised. "But Jesus turned him about; and when he saw her, he said, Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole" (Matt. ix. 22). "And Jesus said

unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way" (Mark x. 52). To the woman who was a sinner, and yet who "loved much," the Master said, "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace" (Luke vii. 50). Of the ten lepers who were healed, only one returned to the Saviour to give thanks, to whom he said, "Arise, go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole" (xvii. 19). "For what saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness" (Rom. iv. 3). What was counted unto Abraham for righteousness? Faith. Whose faith? His own.

In this connection the reader may profitably notice the eleventh chapter of Hebrews which is devoted to the triumphs of faith. While it is true that the writer had no intention of unduly magnifying the individual so as to allow any room for boasting, yet beyond all controversy, each person's faith is designated as his own; moreover because faith is a moral quality—a right attitude of the soul—those who are here enumerated are deservedly praised. Such is our moral nature, that when we do right a sense of approval—of complacency spontaneously arises. So far forth this intrinsically belongs to the person whose conscience says, You have done right. Hence "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and by it he being dead yet speaketh" (v. 5). Gregory the Great, cited by Delitzsch, says, "All that is given to God, is weighed according to the disposition of its giver: whence it is written, 'God had regard to Abel, and to his gifts,

but had no regard to Cain and his gifts.' The Scripture does not say, 'He regarded the gifts of Abel, and did not regard the gifts of Cain,' but first says, that 'He regarded Abel,' and then adds, 'and his gifts.' So we see that it was not the gifts which made Abel to be acceptable, but Abel who made the gifts to be so."

(4) God's work is advanced or hindered in the exact proportion as Faith is or is not exercised. Jesus marvelled at the faith of the centurion, and said, "Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee" (Matt. viii. 13). To the two blind men the Master puts the searching question "Believe ye that I am able to do this?" Receiving an affirmative answer, he said, "According to your faith be it unto you" (Matt. ix. 29). To Jairus, Christ said, "Be not afraid, only believe" (Mark v. 36). To the father who had a son with a dumb spirit, and who was bordering on unbelief, Jesus said, "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth" (Mark ix. 23). True, these passages refer to physical healing; but if a moral state or attitude of the mind is required to heal a physical malady, shall anything less be required for the disease of the soul? Moreover, let us not forget that in all the gracious works of Jesus he sought to impress the mind that he who could heal the body, could, and if he were allowed, would heal the soul. To the disciples all things were conditioned on the exercise of faith. "Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them" (Mark xi. 24). (5) Unbelief, the great sin, and that which absolutely deters God from saving.

This is susceptible of several presentations; viz., (*a*) The disciples are mildly rebuked for not having faith. Peter's unbelief while walking on the water is reproved by the Master, saying, "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" (Matt. xiv. 31). The father of the lunatic son must have been surprised at the failure of the disciples to cast out the evil spirit. When Jesus heard of it he said, "O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you?" "Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out? And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief; for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove: and nothing shall be impossible unto you" (Matt. xvii. 17, 19, 20). The foolish fears of the disciples while in the storm on the Sea of Galilee, are kindly rebuked by the Master, who "said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith" (Mark iv. 40)? While Jesus is teaching the nature of human forgiveness, the apostles exclaimed, "Lord increase our faith." Doubtless this was a very sincere and laudable desire: but so far from the Master granting it in any positive sense—he proceeds to show them that it is their *duty* to have faith (Luke xviii. 3–10). Thomas was called "faithless" because he would not believe without seeing and feeling the nail-prints: nor was he as blessed as they who had not seen, and yet had believed. (John xx. 25, 27, 29.) (*b*) We are warned against unbelief. "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in depart-

ing from the living God." "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." "Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief" (Heb. iii. 12; iv. 1,11). (*c*) God's Ancient People lost through unbelief. "Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be graffed in. Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear: For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee" (Rom. xi. 19–21). "But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness? And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief" (Heb. iii. 17–19). "For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them; but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it." "Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief" (iv. 2, 6). "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him" (ii. 1–3). (*d*) The same condemnation rested on the Jews in the time of Christ. "He that

believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (John iii. 18). "I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (viii. 24). Speaking of the Holy Spirit the Master said, "And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." Why of sin? "Because they believe not on me" (xvi. 8, 9). The dying Stephen justly said, "Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye" (Acts vii. 51). (*e*) The Saviour was deterred by unbelief. "And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them. And he marvelled because of their unbelief" (Mark vi. 5, 6). The only escape possible to the Calvinist is to assert that when men do not believe, God never intended they should. But as we have seen in a previous chapter this is not tenable; not only because the language of the Bible unequivocally condemns it, but also because it irresistibly leads to the charge of insincerity on the part of God. Salvation is conditional. Faith in the divine promises is the condition which man must fulfill before God can save.

## SECTION V.

### *How is Faith Obtained? How Does it Come?*

The Bible answers this question by asserting that faith comes by hearing, reading, and meditating upon the Word. "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. x. 17). "Search

the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me" (John v. 39). "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (xx. 30, 31). It comes by witnessing miraculous events. Concerning the death of Lazarus, the Master said to the disciples, "And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe; nevertheless let us go unto him" (xi. 15). Thomas was doubting until he saw the prints of the nails: hence, seeing was believing: therefore Jesus said unto him, "Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed" (John xx. 29). It may be safely asserted that all the mighty works of Jesus were intended to substantiate his claims of Messiahship: or, to give such evidence of the truthfulness of his claims that men should have no excuse for not believing, or exercising faith. Hence, when speaking to Philip, he says, "Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake" (xiv. 11). Again, speaking of the unbelieving Jews, he says to the disciples, "If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father" (xv. 24). "If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in him" (x. 37, 38).

It follows from the above that a person's faith may be increased, or made stronger, by greater light, a clearer understanding of the Word; or by a more vivid appreciation of the goodness and power of God as seen in Jesus Christ. In this sense the disciples were right—though they ought to have had more faith—when they said to the Lord, "Increase our faith." As we have seen he did increase their faith at the resurrection of Lazarus. Indeed, to them, every day's experience was a new revelation of his infinite love and power, and hence, a continual confirmation of their faith. Yet, so far from being directly given by God, it depended upon them, whether they would or would not improve their opportunities. Thus, subjective, or saving faith is man's part in the saving of the soul: Not without God's aid, however; for were it not for the Holy Spirit convicting men of, and drawing them away from their sins to the cross of Calvary, none would be saved. But at the same time I maintain that the yielding to the divine influences, the exercising of faith in the Saviour is man's act, and not God's: that when so exercised it is really, and hence ought to be, and in the Scriptures is, called my faith: that the soul has the power to, and in many cases, actually does, refuse to believe, against the abundant evidence offered by God, and made additionally strong by the divine Spirit, and thus is lost—contrary to the sincere wish and earnest endeavors of God. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name. Which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of

God" (John i. 11–13). "The power contemplated seems not to be a new moral ability by means of which alone the recipient could exercise saving faith, for the receiving of him by faith precedes in the order of nature this blessing of sonship toward God. To such as had received him, he gave this right or privilege."[1]

Says Alford, " . . . . as many as recognized him as that which he was the Word of God and Light of men." "For as the words received and to them that believe, correspond to one another, and denote the cause; so the effect is denoted in the words to become sons, and is further explained in this verse."[2]

Speaking of this spiritual reception, Neander says, "The appearance of Messiah will cause a sifting of the Theocratic people. This presupposes that he will not overturn all enemies and set up his kingdom at once by the miraculous power of God, but will manifest himself in such a form that those whose hearts are prepared for his coming will recognize him as Messiah."[3]

## SECTION VI.

### *Objections Considered.*

It is now in order to consider the objections against the position herein maintained. It is claimed: I. That the natural man is dead in sin, so that he can not possibly act, or co-operate with God. Dr. Thomas H. Skinner says, "As Christ in his body was dead and buried, was raised from the sepulchre by the exceeding greatness of God's power, so the sinner is

1 Cowles. Commentary.
2 Bengel's "Gnomon of the New Testament."
3 "Life of Christ," p. 54.

dead and buried in the grave of sin, and his resurrection therefrom is by that very same power exerted in him." [4] Rev. Alvan Tobey declares, "In regeneration men are wholly passive; as they also are in the first moment of conversion, but by it become active. Regeneration is an irresistible act of God's grace, no more resistance can be made to it, than there could be by the first matter in its creation, or by a dead man in his resurrection." [5] Dr. Charles Hodge thinks that sinners are as impotent as the man with a withered arm, or the one at the pool of Bethesda. Thus, in refuting the doctrine of the Romanists, he says, "No one denies that the man in the synagogue co-operated in stretching out his withered arm, or that the impotent one at the pool was active in obeying the command of Christ 'Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house.' . . . . So Protestants do not deny that the soul is active in conversion; that the '*Arbitrium a Deo motum*' freely asserts; but they do deny that the sinner is active and co-operating in the production of the new life in the exercise of which the sinner turns to God." Again in speaking of, and indorsing the Augsburg Confession, he says, " . . . . the sinner can in no way prepare himself to be the subject of this grace, he can not merit it, nor can he co-operate with it. Regeneration is exclusively the work of the Spirit, in which man is the subject and not the agent: . . . . therefore it depends on God, and not on man, who are, and who are not, to be made partakers of eternal life." [6]

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4 "Presby. Quarterly," 1873, p. 116.
5 "Bib. Sacra," Vol. XVIII., p. 382.
6 "Theology." Vol. II., pp. 718, 720.

Reversing the order of thought, let us reconsider the miracles of healing, which, it is claimed, are fair illustrations of the workings of grace. In the case of the man with a withered hand, it is to be frankly confessed that so far as the command of the Master is concerned, "Stretch forth thine hand," it was, to the man, a physical impossibility. This is seen at a glance, otherwise, there was no need of seeking the aid of Christ. But back of the physical impossibility was the will, or the disposition of the man which is a most important factor in the healing. As we have seen, Christ invariably demanded faith as the condition of healing: because it is not mentioned here, we are not to suppose that it was not required. Hence as the man earnestly desired to be healed, his will did cooperate with the command, and hence the necessary strength was received. Had he refused to exercise faith, there is no rational doubt that he would have remained unhealed. Now so far as this illustrates the saving of the soul, it is unmistakably in favor of the doctrine for which I am contending. No man can be saved of himself: otherwise, why should God provide a Saviour? But man, lost as he is, may have a desire to be saved, a disposition to do what is told him, and hence, under the influences of the Holy Spirit, he wills to believe, he exercises faith in the crucified Saviour, and is saved. Here I gladly quote the words of Dr. Barnes, who, although a Calvinist, has unqualifiedly indorsed the Arminian doctrine that God saves according to man's attitude. "The man might have said that he had no strength: that it was a thing which he could not do. Yet, being commanded, it was his duty to obey. He did so, and was healed.

So the sinner. It is his duty to obey whatever God commands. He will give strength to those who attempt to do his will. It is not right to plead, when God commands us to do a thing, that we have no strength. God will give us strength, if there is a disposition to obey. Please mark this. "God will give us strength if there is a disposition to obey." If Calvinism be correct, there is no "if" about it: man has no disposition; can have no disposition toward God until it is irresistibly conferred upon him, put within him, which of course prompts him to obey. This one little word "if" which Dr. Barnes has so unconsciously used is the key to the whole subject. The Calvinists would banish it from theology, but like Banquo's ghost, it will not down.

This leads to the consideration of the question, Is man's moral nature literally dead? The Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians affords, perhaps, the most plausible texts to support the doctrine that man is passive in regeneration. "And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins. Even when we were dead in sins, hath he quickened us together with Christ, by grace ye are saved" (ii. 1, 5).

In the Bible the words "dead," "death" and "die" are variously used. At times death is predicated of the bodily life, as "Lazarus is dead"; again it is affirmed of the soul. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him, Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins" (James v. 19, 20). In the first pas-

sage cited, we understand by the death of Lazarus that he had absolutely lost his bodily life: consequently he was entirely passive in his resurrection. Now if this is the meaning which is fairly demanded in other passages where death is affirmed of the spiritual nature, I have nothing to say. The Calvinist is right, and I can only bow in silence to that which seems to me extremely perplexing. But is this interpretation demanded? I not only think that it is not, but I am of the opinion that upon investigation it will be found utterly incongruous.

Death, whether physical or spiritual, is the opposite of life. Spiritual life is communion with God: spiritual death takes place the moment that communion ceases, hence, spiritual death is alienation from God; a perversion of the moral powers; a refusal to use them in the service and for the glory of God. But the non-use of a faculty does not imply its non-existence. Consequently the word "dead" in the passages under consideration is to be understood as teaching the moral perversity of men, the non-recognition of the claims of God, or the bondage of sin in which men are living. That the term "dead" can not be as literally applied to the moral as to the physical nature of man is evident, because (1) Men are addressed as though they were capable of co-operating with God. This has been clearly shown by the many passages previously considered in this chapter. Of necessity there can be no condition if there is no co-operation. But as Dr. Barnes confesses there is a condition: hence there are two persons.

The following passages clearly assert that man must do his part in securing divine pardon. The

rebellious Israelites were to remember the mercy of God and earnestly seek him : for "if from thence thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Deut. iv. 29). Speaking through the "Minstrel sublime" God says, "Wash ye, make you clean ; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes : cease to do evil ; learn to do well : seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow" (Isa. i. 16, 17).

According to Jeremiah God will punish or forgive in the exact proportion as the people correct their ways. "Therefore now amend your ways, and your doings, and obey the voice of the Lord your God ; and the Lord will repent him of the evil that he hath pronounced against you" (xxvi. 13). From Ezekiel we learn that the wicked are as active, that they have as much power to turn as the righteous. "When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them ; for his iniquity that he hath done shall he die. Again, when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive. Because he considereth, and turneth away from all his transgressions that he hath committed, he shall surely live, he shall not die" (xviii. 26–28). James gives good advice when he says "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners, and purify your hearts, ye double minded. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up" (iv. 8, 10). In vain does Dr. Hodge say that these and other passages imply "nothing more than

the authoritative declaration of what is obligatory upon those to whom it is addressed." I venture the assertion that the same language used among men would be universally understood as implying, not only obligation, but also some degree of power to fulfill the obligation. The Bible is written in a plain, common-sense way, and it is a fact capable of verification that in all ages the great mass of men have so understood these declarations. As a matter of historic interest the view condemned by Dr. Hodge was quite universally accepted by the Christian Church prior to the time of Augustine. Hagenbach testifies as follows- "Freedom and immortality are those traits of the human mind in which is manifested the image of God. Such was the doctrine of the primitive Church, confirmed by the general Christian consciousness. All the Greek fathers, as well as the apologists, Justin, Tatian, Athenagoras, Theophilus, and the Latin author, Minutius Felix, also the theologians of the Alexandrian school, Clement and Origen, exalt the autonomy, self-determination of the human soul. . . . None but heretics ventured to maintain that man is subject to another influence than himself."[1] Dr. Hodge frequently seeks to support his doctrines by an appeal to the past; in this case the verdict is against him. Men have thought and will continue to think, that when the Bible says "Cease to do evil," "Draw nigh to God," "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes," it presupposes that those to whom the words are addressed have the power thus to do. (2) The spiritual nature of man is not literally dead, or actually lost, because if

[1] "History of Doctrine." Vol. I., p. 155.

this were so, there would be no basis for a spiritual recovery. Dr. Hodge truly says "The essential attributes of a spirit are reason, conscience and will. A spirit is a rational, moral, and therefore also a free agent."[2] It follows therefore, that if these attributes which are essential to a spirit should be lost, if they are dead—like the body at the termination of the physical life—the spirit has lost its essential characteristics. Through what avenues then does spiritual truth reach the soul? Can we know anything of God? Manifestly not; for as Dr. Hodge admits, "This conformity of nature between man and God is not only the distinguishing prerogative of humanity, so far as earthly creatures are concerned, but it is also the necessary condition of our capacity to know God, and therefore the foundation of our religious nature.[3]

But all men have or have not a religious nature. If the unregenerate have not a religious nature then God, in restoring that which is lost must act immediately upon the personality. This Dr. Hodge seems to imply when he says of God, "He operates when, where and how he sees fit, without the intervention of any second cause. By a word, or a volition, raising the spiritually dead, opening the eyes of the heart, renewing the will, communicating what the Scriptures call a new nature."[4]

If we have spiritual nature before regeneration, how is it possible for the soul to be as literally dead as the body? When the body dies, the work of disintegration begins. If not arrested the body soon

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2 "Systematic Theology." Vol. II., p. 97.

3 Ibid.

4 "Theology." Vol. II., p. 694.

disappears. But if the spiritual nature of man is imperishable, then the soul can not be dead ; and hence the only tenable conclusion is that which I previously affirmed, viz., that by spiritual death is meant the perversion of man's moral powers ; his affections are misplaced, his judgment and conscience—to a greater or less degree—say he ought to love God, but his will refuses to coincide. Change the ruling purpose and the man will become a Christian.

When Dr. Hodge combats the doctrine of annihilation, the view for which I am contending is not only recognized, but, as it seems to me, heartily accepted : he says, "The word life means one thing when used of plants, another when used of animals, and another when spoken of in reference to the soul of man. The death of a plant is one thing, the death of an immortal soul is something entirely different." Speaking of life, he says, "The word, when used of the soul of man, means not only conscious being, but a normal state of being in the likeness, fellowship, and enjoyment of God. And in like manner the word death, when spoken of the soul, means alienation or separation from God." Precisely so. But is a man who is alienated from God as really dead, as truly passive as when his body dies ? Moreover, the unconscious concession that "life" "when used of the soul of man, means . . . . a normal state of being in the likeness . . . . of God," signifies that a sinful soul is in an abnormal state. But does abnormal mean as passive as a dead body ?

This conclusion is susceptible of a different verification. If, as Dr. Hodge affirms, "Spiritual death is as real as corporal death," then when God restores

that which is dead—that which is lost—something has been added to the soul. To deny this is to say that the soul has lost nothing—in the proper sense of that term—which is the very thing for which I am contending.

But, if I mistake not, Dr. Hodge does deny that anything is added to the soul: he says, "Regeneration does not consist in a change in any one of the faculties of the soul, whether the sensibility, or the will, or the intellect." Again, it is "not a change of the higher, as distinguished from the lower powers of the soul." "Nor any change in the substance of the soul."[5]

If regeneration does not change the soul's substance, nor the higher, nor the lower powers, nor any of the faculties, then so far forth as the spiritual nature is concerned it remains the same as before. Consequently so far as its real nature is concerned, the soul has not lost anything, and therefore, is not, and can not be said to be as literally dead as the body when life departs. Or, quoting the words of Dr. Hodge, "as real as corporeal death." Cowles admirably says, ". . . . dead, not in the sense of having no mind, but of having a bad mind—not of being without moral sense, but of having perverted their moral sense and crushed it down."

Dr. Hodge is entirely too literal in his idea of spiritual death, for (3) The Scriptures affirm that man has not utterly lost his spiritual sense. Paul declares that the heathen have some sense of right and wrong, and at times are excused by their consciences. "For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nat-

[5] "Theology." Vol. III., pp. 15, 17, 32.

ure the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves. Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another" (Rom. ii. 14, 15). The fall did not deprive man of some likeness to God, for the prohibition against shedding man's blood is based on the fact that he is yet in the divine image. "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God made he man" (Gen. ix. 6). The same truth is taught by the apostle when he says, "For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of the man" (1. Cor. xi. 7). If the reader should suggest that these expressions refer to the intellectual nature of man while Dr. Hodge is speaking of the spiritual nature, I would respectfully reply that intrinsically considered the spiritual is involved in the intellectual. An intellectual act is, or is not, spiritual according to the motive which prompts the act. This is practically conceded by Dr. Hodge when he admits that "the soul is a unit." The following testimony is peculiarly interesting as coming from eminent Calvinists. Dr. John Tulloch says, "Man is a fallen and degraded being. He is at the best, be he Pharisee or Publican, among the 'lost' whom Christ came to seek and to save. But he is noble even in his degradation. There is a capacity of divine life in him, beneath all the ruin of his nature. He is God-like, even with the image of his divine original broken and defaced. The divine likeness is obscured, but not obliterated. It may be traced amidst all the accumulations of sin-

ful ruin. . . . . There is nothing more characteristic of our Lord's teaching than this recognition of the divine original of humanity, and of the divine potency which still survives in it. This is the only key to his redemptive mission. He came to recover the fallen, and to set up that which had been thrown down. . . . . Dark as sin ever is, therefore, in the view of our Lord, and fallen as human nature is, it is not yet, as it has been sometimes represented, a mere mass of corruption. The tone which could say of it that it contains nothing but sin, and produces nothing which is not damnable, is foreign to the Gospels." [6]

Dr. W. G. T. Shedd says: "There must be this correspondence between the judicial nature of man, and the judicial nature of God, or religion is impossible. How can man even know what is meant by justice in the Deity, if there is absolutely nothing of the same species in his own rational constitution, which if realized in his own character as it is in that of God, would make him just, as God is just? How can he know what is meant by moral perfection in God, if in his own rational spirit there is absolutely no ideal of moral excellence, which if realized in himself as it is in the Creator, would make him excellent as he is excellent? Without some mental correspondent, to which to appeal and commend themselves, the teachings of revelation could not be apprehended. A body of knowledge alone is not the whole; there must be an inlet for it, an organ of apprehension. But if there is no such particular part of the human constitution as has been described, and these calm judgments of the moral sense, and this righteous

[6] "The Christian Doctrine of Sin," pp. 131, 132.

displeasure of the conscience, are to be put upon a level with the workings of the fancy and imagination, or the selfish passions of the human heart, then there is no point of contact and communication between the nature of man and the being of God. There is no part of his own complex being upon which man may fall back, with the certainty of not being mistaken in judgments of ethics and religion. Both anchor and anchoring-ground are gone, and he is afloat upon the boundless, starless ocean of ignorance and scepticism. Even if revelations are made, they can not enter his mind. There is no contacting surface through which they can approach and take hold of his being. They can not be seen to be what they really are, the absolute truth of God, because there is no eye with which to see them." [7]

II. It is objected that the view here taught contradicts many passages of Scripture in which men are said to be drawn unto the Father: viz., "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. Every man therefore that hath heard, and learned of the Father, cometh unto me. No man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father" (John vi. 44, 45, 65).

But I find no difficulty with these declarations. I accept them as teaching the necessity of a divine influence for the salvation of the soul. Nowhere have I taught that man can save himself. On the contrary I have strenuously maintained that without God, the soul is hopelessly lost in sin. Denying the passivity of man is not denying the activity of God. To be

[7] "Discourses and Essays," pp. 290, 291.

saved men must be drawn to Jesus, but the yielding to those influences is implied in the exercise of faith which is man's part in, and the sole condition of, salvation. The merciful Father earnestly seeks to draw all unto Jesus. Why he does not, the Saviour's own words inform us: "And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life" (John v. 40). Hence as Neander truly says: "He who will not follow the Divine 'drawing' (revealed in his dawning consciousness of God) can never attain to faith in Christ, and must feel himself repelled from his words." [8]

The same principle will apply to such passages as "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life. . . . ." (John x. 27, 28). "It is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given" (Matt. xiii. 11). "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes" (xi. 25). The Master's sheep are those, who, having the right disposition, as Dr. Barnes says, or in whom there is the spirit of faith, are drawn unto "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." And what was the reason why "these things," "the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven" were concealed "from the wise and prudent"? Let the reader turn again to the words of the Master, Matt. xiii. 12: "For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance; but whosoever hath not from him shall be taken away, even that he hath." Here is a most fortunate occurrence. The very passage which

[8] "Life of Christ," p. 106.

Dr. Hodge quotes as favoring the doctrine that God purposely withholds enlightening grace, Jesus explains, giving as the reason why the mysteries of the kingdom are concealed from some men, that in them there is a fatal lack—they have no desire to improve their opportunities.

III. It is said that the Scriptures declare repentance to be a gift from God. In speaking to the unbelieving Jews, Peter says of Jesus, "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins" (Acts v. 31). Paul tells Timothy that "the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth" (II. Tim. ii. 24, 25). Now, I ask the reader, in all fairness, what are we to understand by these passages? As truth seekers we are to open our minds to every ray of light, and so far as possible, judge things upon their merits. If Dr. Hodge's interpretation is the only one allowable, or if it is more consistent, with the general subject under consideration, then I must accept it. So far as I know, there are but three possible views: viz., (1) That of Dr. Hodge—faith and repentance the direct gifts of God withheld from the non-elect. (2) That of Dr. Whedon, who says of II. Tim. ii. 24, 25, that it is "the power, not the act of repentance" which is divinely given; and (3) That these declarations are used comprehensively to express the general work of salvation and not to discriminate concerning the divine and human.

I can not agree with Dr. Whedon's exposition, because if I mistake not, the fundamental principles of his theology necessitate the conclusion that all men have the power to repent.[9] But in II. Tim. ii. 25 there is a conditional giving; there was something of which these "opposers" were destitute. They may obtain it; otherwise the "if" is of no force; hence it can not be the power to repent which is here meant, for Arminians have always earnestly contended that God does give power for the obeying of his commands; but in these passages that which is affirmed as coming from God is not given unconditionally; nay, it might be withheld.

My reasons for rejecting the interpretation of Dr. Hodge will be manifest as I elucidate the third view. For a correct understanding of this subject we must turn to the Master's words expressed to the disciples just before his ascension. "Thus it is written and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day. And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jesusalem" (Luke xxiv. 46, 47).

The Master here describes the future work of the apostles. In its spirit it was the same as he had been doing, and in which they had assisted him, as we find from the following: "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. iv. 17). "And they went out, and preached that men should repent" (Mark vi. 12).

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9 "Power must underlie obligation." "Will," p. 398. "Man is . . . born in a 'state of initial salvation' as Fletcher of Madeley called it, and the means of final salvation are amply placed within the reach of his free choice" "Meth. Quarterly," 1879, p. 411.

As this was the work of the disciples before the ascension, so was it afterwards. It was God's work; it was the work of saving souls estranged from the Father, hence, it is repeatedly called the work of salvation; hence, my view of these passages is simply this: they speak of repentance and of the remission of sins in a popular way, as included in the work of salvation. Thinking of the results as a whole, remembering, that without divine aid, salvation is impossible, the apostles used common, instead of scientific or theological language. This method of speaking was adopted by the Saviour when he said to the woman of Samaria, "Salvation is of the Jews." An extreme literalist could say with the same degree of plausibility Jesus here taught that the Jews could save. The Master's meaning is sufficiently clear the moment we consider the circumstances in which the words were uttered, namely: that salvation comes through or by the Hebrew nation as God's chosen people. But in my opinion the meaning of repentance as here used is no less clear when we fairly consider the circumstances in which the word was employed.

This will be more evident as we consider a few passages in which the term repentance occurs. "But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice; for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Matt. ix. 13). Peter explains his strange conduct while with the Gentiles by saying, "Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God? When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then

hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life." (Acts xi. 17, 18). "Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?" (Rom. ii. 4). "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." (xi. 29). Peter declares that God is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." (II. Pet. iii. 9). In these passages the general work of salvation is the primary idea; yet repentance is spoken of as the result of Christ's coming and call; or as the consequence of a right perception of God's goodness. While "salvation is of the Jews," it came by them to the Gentiles; hence, repentance is said to have been granted unto them. But why were the Jews rejected? Because they sinned and would not repent. Hence my conclusion concerning these passages is this: they were intended to express the general work of salvation, which of necessity is of God. The Holy Spirit's influences followed, give as a result, repentance for sin and salvation: Yet the faith and repentance are acts of the individual, which may, or may not be exercised. IV. It is said the Bible declares faith to be the gift of God, namely, "For to one is given by the spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same spirit; to another faith by the same spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same spirit" (I. Cor. xii. 8, 9). "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God" (Eph. ii. 8). For a correct understanding of the first passage we must remember that chapters xii–xiv. are devoted to a consideration of spiritual gifts. In the Church of

Corinth there had been not a little confusion growing out of the exercising of the different gifts conferred upon them by the Holy Spirit. While some were prophesying, others were interpreting ; while some were praying, others were singing, thus bringing the faith of the gospel into disrepute. The apostle corrects this by showing that while there is a diversity of gifts there is but one source whence they come : hence, as God is not the author of confusion they must become more orderly. Consequently, as a matter of fact, there is no reference in the mind of the apostle to the gift of saving, or justifying faith : that is necessarily presupposed to be possessed by all to whom he is writing ; the faith here spoken of is that kind of faith, trust, or strength necessary for the performance of some daring or extraordinary duty. Precisely like Luther's experience at the Diet of Worms. He already possessed saving faith : now, as he stands before his enemies, the truth as it is in Jesus Christ must be clear and strong ; hence, if he will seek and trust divine grace, his voice shall penetrate the four quarters of the earth. The same general idea is expressed by Lange. "Not that faith which receives salvation in Christ, *i. e.*, justifying faith, but a strong confidence in the divine omnipotence, or in the power of Christ as able to make itself manifest in extraordinary deeds ; or to afford and insure help of a supernatural kind ; or, in other words, a confidence which shall enable a man to perform these deeds, or to afford this help." Generically the same kind of faith which was lacking in the disciples when they attempted, but failed, to cure the lunatic son. As we have seen their faith was increased by witnessing the resurrection of Lazarus.

The Spirit sanctified this unto their spiritual good; consequently in this sense faith comes by, or through the Spirit.

Concerning the passage in Ephesians it is pertinent to ask What is the gift of God? Is it the grace or the faith? If the latter, then so far, the discussion must be decided in favor of Dr. Hodge. If the former, then the last support to the doctrine that faith is a direct gift of God is removed. I shall now endeavor to show that such is the fact. Alford's translation is as follows: "For by grace have ye been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; of God is the gift." Commenting on the text, he says, "'by grace' above, expressed the objective instrumental condition of your salvation,—this 'through faith' the subjective medial condition; it has been effected by grace and apprehended by faith: and this (your salvation your having been saved) not of yourselves; God's is the gift." Lange says "The emphasis rests on 'by grace,' which is placed first, being the *causa efficiens;* the *causa apprehendens* follows, as a modal qualification." Again, "'And that' refers back to the idea of the preceding verb: 'ye are saved' in the sense of *et quidem:* and this in addition I say, or and this, being saved through faith, comes not of yourselves." The testimony of Dr. Riddle, the American Editor, is quite suggestive. "The reference to salvation is adopted by Calvin, Rueckert, Harless, Olshausen, Meyer, DeWette, Stier, Eadie, Alford, Ellicott, and every commentator of note since the days of Bengel, except Hodge." Elsewhere Dr. Riddle says ". . . . . on doctrinal grounds there is no objection to the reference to faith;" and, quoting Dr. Hodge, "The analogy of Scripture is

in favor of this view." But this is not so evident. As the discussion continues the reader will see that the analogy of Scripture requires the doctrine which has been maintained in this chapter. If the clearest passages of Scripture concerning the origin and nature of faith, if the texts upon which Dr. Hodge confidently relies do not teach that faith is a direct gift of God, it is certainly contradicted by the analogy of faith. This is more clearly seen by remembering that throughout the Scriptures the grace of God, the salvation of the Lord Jesus Christ is designated "the gift of God." To the woman of Samaria the Master said, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water" (John iv. 10). Bengel says "The gift is the living water." Meyer refers it to the meeting and conversation with Jesus. Alford thinks it is the gift of the Holy Spirit. The fundamental idea is the same. Salvation is the gift. Its conditionality is unmistakably affirmed by the words "if thou knewest"—"thou wouldest have asked." As Dr. Hanna has said, "Still from the lips of the Saviour of the world, over all the world the words are sounding forth: 'If any man thirst, let him come to me and drink.' Still the manner of his dispensation of the great gift stands embodied in the words: "Thou wouldest have asked, and I would have given thee living water.'"

In the light of this investigation we more clearly see the true moral relation between evidence and faith. God can not compel the mind to believe: there may be, and is such abundant evidence as to convince all who have any disposition to believe: at the same time

there must be and is full scope for men to refuse. This, I say, must be so : otherwise there can be no test, no responsibility, and so far forth, no merit or demerit. In this connection I am happy to quote from Doctor Mark Hopkins. "Certainly, if God has provided evidence as convincing as that of the forty-seventh proposition of Euclid, so that all men have to do is to examine it with candor, then they must be without excuse if they do not believe. This, I suppose, God has done. He asks no one to believe except on the ground of evidence, and such evidence as ought to command assent. Let a man examine this evidence with entire candor, laying aside all prejudices, simply according to the laws of evidence, and then if he is not convinced, I believe God will so far forth acquit him in the great day of judgment. But if God has given man such evidence that a fair, and full, and perfectly candid examination is all that is needed to necessitate belief, then, if men do not believe, it will be in this very law that we shall find the ground of their condemnation. The difficulty will not lie in their mental constitution as related to evidence, nor in the want of evidence, but in that moral condition, that state of the heart, or the will, which prevented a proper examination." [1]

The thought of Pascal is admirable. "Divine truths reach the spirit through the heart. We must love divine things in order to know them. Christianity reveals herself to those only who possess a sincere longing to know her."

[1] "Evidences of Christianity."

## CHAPTER IV.

## For What Are The Non-Elect Eternally Punished?

"The ivy in a dungeon grew,
Unfed by rain, uncheered by dew;
The pallid leaflets only drank
Cave-moistures foul, and odors dank.

But through the dungeon-grating high
There fell a sunbeam from the sky;
It slept upon the grateful floor
In silent gladness evermore.

The ivy felt a tremor shoot
Through all its fibres to the root;
It felt the light, it saw the ray,
It strove to blossom into day;

It grew, it crept, it pushed, it clomb—
Long had the darkness been its home:
But well it knew, though veiled in night,
The goodness and the joy of light.

It reached the beam—it thrilled—it curled—
It blessed the warmth that cheers the world;
It rose towards the dungeon bars—
It looked upon the sky and stars.

It felt the life of bursting spring,
It heard the happy skylark sing;
It caught the breath of morns and eves,
And wooed the swallow to its leaves.

By rains and dews, and sunshine fed,
Over the outer wall it spread;
And in the daybeam waving free,
It grew into a steadfast tree.

Wouldst know the moral of the rhyme?
Behold the heavenly light and climb!
To every dungeon comes a ray
Of God's interminable day!"

## CHAPTER IV.

## For What Are The Non-Elect Eternally Punished?

Calvinism claims to be the teaching of Scripture. In this Part I have tried to bring the Augustinian or Calvinistic theology face to face with the Word of God, thus enabling the reader to judge for himself. So far, the claims of the Calvinist have not been verified. The previous chapters have shown a great disparity between the so-called orthodox faith and the Scriptures. I shall now attempt to show that Calvinism still further contradicts the plain teaching of God's Word.

### SECTION I.

### *Can the Non-Elect be Saved?*

The Bible answers this question clearly and consistently by declaring that so far as the will of God is related to the salvation of the race, all may be saved. Christ came to seek and to save the lost (Luke xix. 10). But all are lost. Yes, and the gracious Saviour died for all, that through faith in him all might be saved (John iii. 16, 17). The one condition of salvation—faith which worketh by love—is, as we have seen, the part which the soul must do. Refusing to believe, the sinner must die in his sins: he can not be saved. This is so, not because it is the will of God,

nor because God could, but does not give saving faith; but it is because the soul thus refusing to accept the divine promises places itself beyond the reach of saving grace (John xvi. 8, 9; Matt. xxiii. 37; Heb. xi. 6). But as we proceed, the reader will please notice that Calvinism denies that which the Scriptures clearly affirm.

Calvin delares the doctrine of salvation "is abused when it is represented as effectually available to all."[1]

Toplady says, God never designed to save every individual; since if he had, every individual would and must be saved, for his counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure. . . . . Neither is it possible, in the very nature of the thing, that they should be elected to salvation, or ever obtain it, whom God foreknew should perish; for then the divine act of preterition would be changeable, wavering and precarious. . . . . If between the elect and reprobate there was not a great gulf fixed, so that neither can be otherwise than they are, then the will of God, which is alone the cause why some are chosen, and others not, would be rendered inefficacious and of no effect."[2]

In a work entitled "A Defence of Some of the Important Doctrines of the Gospel" and published by the Presbyterian Board of Publication, Rev. John Sladen says, "Some allow of a particular election, but deny any such thing as non-election or preterition: they grant that a certain number shall infallibly be saved, but at the same time, affirm that all may be saved if they will. This is an opinion that is absurd

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1 "Institutes." B. III., Ch. XXII., Sec. 10.

2 "Works," pp. 692, 693.

in its very nature, as well as it is evidently contrary to the Word of God." [3]

While Dr. Griffin is speaking of the non-elect as marching on to death, he makes his opponent say as a reason for their fate, "they do not believe" : to this he answers "Aye, and one reason why they do not believe is that faith is the gift of God." [4]

Beyond all controversy faith is necessary to salvation ; how then, is it possible for the non-elect to be saved if God has determined to withhold the gift of saving faith ? There is no such possibility if Calvinism be true. The above extracts sufficiently indicate the drift of consistent Calvinism. But there are theologians who prefer the name of "modern" or "modified" Calvinists who endeavor to maintain both sides of the question. One moment they declare that inasmuch as faith is withheld from the non-elect they can not be saved ; but presto change, and the very reverse is affirmed, namely, that if the non-elect will only believe they may and will be saved. This is one of the necessary features of the so-called "modified Calvinism." It is quite difficult to distinguish its true bearings. The student is perplexed by the many plain contradictions which constantly meet him. It has the reputation of being less repugnant than the older Calvinism, but it is at the expense of consistency and the logical forms of thought.

That the reader may judge for himself concerning the validity of this charge, I shall now quote from the

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[3] p. 76.

[4] "Divine Efficiency," p. 184.

writings of a few able authorities, placing their different utterances side by side. Dr. Venema says :

"All have common grace, and it is possible for all to believe ; and if they will believe they will be saved." p. 303.

"God determined what the creatures would do, and what their condition would be, who should believe, and who should not : and that his decree regarding them and everything relating to them was absolute." p. 290.

The following is from Nehemiah Adams.

"No injustice is done to those who are left : salvation is consistently offered to them, and their state is no worse than though all like them had perished." p. 246.

"True, he saw that no one would turn without some special act on his part." p. 254.

Dr. Emmons says :

"If men have natural power to frustrate, as well as to fulfill the decrees of God, then the non-elect have as fair an opportunity of being saved as the elect." Vol. II., p. 368.

"He decreed the existence, the character, the conduct and the state of all moral beings both in time and eternity. He decreed that some should be the monuments of his goodness, some, the monuments of his justice; and some the monuments of his mercy. And he decreed all the means by which his rational creatures should be brought to their final and eternal condition." p. 333.

Dr. Leonard Woods says that

"God will save all the non-elect who comply with the conditions of salvation." Vol. I. p. 543.

"He knows men will not repent, unless by his Spirit, he gives them repentance." p. 511.

The celebrated John Howe affirms:

"Whatsoever there is that comes within the compass of a promise for the encouragement of sinners to return and come to God, it will all be made good to a tittle upon his account that is worthy; all promises being yea and amen in him." p. 1139.

"Nothing but the almighty power of grace can make an enemy heart become friendly towards God and towards his Christ: can vanish the malignity of an obstinate infidelity; can mollify an obdurate heart and make it dissolve and melt, as in repentance it must." p. 1139.

Although Rev. John Sladen calls the following from Dr. Wm. Smith absurd and unbiblical, I will let the reader judge for himself:

"It (election) embraces no decree or purpose that hinders any one from coming to Christ and being saved if they would." p. 29.

"His decrees *are not* dependent upon his foreknowledge, not identical with it. . But when all equally deserve hell, if he sees fit to save some for a display of his mercy, and leave others to the fate they choose for a display of his justice, though the former have great ground of gratitude, the others have no cause of complaint." p. 57.

The same beautifully consistent "if" is thus put by Milner in his "Practical Sermons," Vol. II.:

"All men may be saved if they please. There wants the will only." p. 243.

"But such is our natural enmity against God, that though the blood of his Son was freely spilt for all men without exception, not one soul would return to God by true repentance were it not for his blessed and adorable purpose of election, which before the foundation of the world, determined that some souls should be fitted by his universal redemption and led to repentance toward God and to faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." p. 243.

It does not require a very profound insight to detect the sophism in the following from Dr. Charles Hodge:

"The righteousness of Christ being of infinite value or merit, and being in its nature precisely what all men need, may be offered to all men. It is thus offered to the elect and to the non-elect; and it is offered to both classes conditionally. That condition is a cordial acceptance of it as the only ground of justification. If any of the elect (being adults) fail thus to accept of it, they perish. If any of the non-elect should believe, they would be

". . . . The fall of Adam brought all his posterity into a state of condemnation, sin, and misery, from which they are utterly unable to deliver themselves. . . . For the salvation of those thus chosen to eternal life, God gave his own Son, to become man, and to obey and suffer for his people, thus making a full satisfaction for sin, and bringing in everlasting righteousness, rendering the ultimate salvation of the elect absolutely certain.

saved. What more does any Anti-Augustinian scheme provide?" pp. 555, 556. Vol. II.

That while the Holy Spirit, in his common operations, is present with every man, so long as he lives, restraining evil and exciting good, his certainly efficacious and saving power is exercised only in behalf of the elect." p. 333.

The following is from "Outlines of Theology" by Dr. A. A. Hodge:

"A salvation all sufficient and exactly adapted to his necessities is honestly offered to every man to whom the gospel comes; *and in* every case it is his, if he believes; and in no case does anything prevent his believing other than his own evil disposition. . . . If a man is responsible for a bad heart, and the exercises thereof, he must be above all, worthy of condemnation for rejecting such a Saviour." p. 317.

Of the "inner call" our author says, "That it is an exercise of divine power upon the soul, immediately, spiritual, and supernatural, communicating a new spiritual life, and thus making a new mode of spiritual activity possible. That repentance, faith, trust, hope, love, etc., are purely and simply the sinner's own acts; but as such are possible to him only in virtue of the change wrought in the moral condition of his faculties by the recreative power of God." p. 336.

Truly our Calvinistic friends are magnanimous. The non-elect may be saved "if they would only believe," and yet saving faith is the gift of God. The non-elect may be saved if they will exercise true repentance, yet they are in a state of condemnation, sin and misery from which they are utterly unable to deliver themselves." The non-elect are "worthy of condemnation for rejecting such a Saviour," while at the same time they can not exercise faith, hope, and

love until the change is "wrought in the moral condition of 'their' faculties by the recreative power of God." While I abhor the peculiar doctrines of Calvinism, I have some respect for the logical consistency and fearlessness of the older theology; but away with this so-called "Modified Calvinism." It explains nothing. Nay, it increases the difficulties by outraging the reader's intelligence.

## SECTION II.

### *How Certain Calvinists Vindicate the Divine Justice and Sincerity.*

The student of theology occasionally meets a Calvinistic theologian who seems to be in trouble. The system may be perfectly satisfactory to him; but he has a certain feeling—at times a positive conviction—that to others the doctrines of Calvinism are not so pleasant, nor reasonable. Thinking that he is sustained by the truth of reason no less than of revelation, he often attempts to remove the objections which are urged against his position.

The former section disclosed the fact that the non-elect can not be saved: that even those who declare they may if they will only believe, also declare that without the gift of faith they can not believe: There is a third class, however, whose views are somewhat peculiar, and which in their opinion, satisfactorily solve the perplexing question. These I now propose to consider in detail: and first, let us hear from Dr. Isaac Watts. Of the non-elect he says, "God himself has put no effectual and insurmountable bar, or rather no bar at all, in their way, to prevent their acceptance of his

grace. His choosing other persons who were fellow sinners, to make them certain partakers of this grace, is no hindrance to those who were not chosen, from accepting the same. It is my opinion that there is such a thing as a general sufficiency of pardon, grace and happiness, provided for all mankind by Jesus Christ. And it is left to their own natural powers under common helps to accept or refuse it." Then he gives the following to show that this must be so: "It is very hard to vindicate the sincerity of the blessed God, or his Son, in their universal offers of grace and salvation to men, and their sending ministers and such messages and invitations to accept of mercy, if there be no such a conditional pardon and salvation provided for them. . . . It is hard to suppose that the great God, who is truth itself, and sincere and faithful in all his dealings, should call upon dying men to trust in a Saviour for eternal life, when this Saviour has no eternal life intrusted with him to give them, if they do repent. It is hard to conceive how the great Governor of the world can be sincere in inviting and requiring sinners who are on the brink of hell to cast themselves upon an empty word of invitation, a mere shadow and appearance of support, if there be nothing real to bear them up from those deeps of destruction, nothing but mere words and empty invitations." Again: "I say it is hard to suppose all this should be no real and just representation, but a mere amusement. That all these proposals of mercy and displays of the gracious dealings of God, should be an empty shew with regard to all the millions of mankind, besides the few that are chosen to happiness: and that they should really be so fixed in a wretched, hopeless,

and deplorable state under the first sin of the first man that they are utterly irrecoverable from the ruins of it; and that even as unalterably so as devils are without any hope of recovering from their state of guilt and misery, for whom there was no Saviour provided, and whom God has not treated in this way of precept, promise and threatening." [5]

The reader will please notice that this explanation is given as the only one which satisfactorily vindicate the divine goodness and justice. But so far as it solves the problem, the doctrine of Dr. Watts is Arminianism.

This is evident from the following considerations: (1) Dr. Watts held the Arminian doctrine that the will is self-determining. Section 3 of his essay "On the Freedom of Will in God and in Creatures," is entitled "The Will is a Self-determining Power." In speaking of the advantages of this doctrine, he says, "This scheme of the self-determining power of the will represents the doctrine of the freedom of man's will, and the power and prevalence of divine grace in a most happy harmony and consistency, perhaps beyond what any other scheme can represent." [6]

(2) If the human will is self-determining, then it legitimately follows that salvation is a matter of choice: God saves all who will exercise faith in the Saviour: hence Dr. Watts says of salvation, ". . . . it is left to their own natural powers, under common helps to accept or refuse it." Again, this scheme also fixes the guilt of evil actions entirely on the will of the creature, by ascribing to the will a free power to de-

[5] "Works." Vol. III., pp. 468, 470.

[6] Pages, 262, 575.

termine itself, either to choose or to refuse after any representations of good or evil, fitness or unfitness. made by the understanding. [7]

(3) Dr. Watts held the Arminian doctrine of divine foresight. "I grant, always, and have always granted, that wheresoever there is such an antecedent superior fitness of things, God acts according to it, so as never to contradict it: and particularly in all his judicial proceedings as a Governor and Distributer of rewards and punishments, he has a constant regard to vice, and virtue, to superior fitness and unfitness, though he may reward or rather bestow beyond our merit, or he may punish less." In speaking of the different theories of "reconciliation" he asks "A," "Does he not also believe, that the blessed God foresees and foreknows that these men, by the free use of their natural powers, thus far assisted by divine grace, will be finally and effectually persuaded to believe and repent, and be saved? Has not the blessed God, who knows all his own works from the beginning, designed from eternity to bestow all these advantages on these particular persons, and to carry them on so far, that he foresees their repentance, and salvation will be the certain consequences of this his grace, though not the necessary effects of it?" [8]

Believing that the reader can readily recognize these statements as essentially Arminian, I will not stop to adduce proof beyond one statement from Dr. Charles Hodge, viz., "It is plain that the main point of difference between the later Lutheran, the Arminian, and the Wesleyan schemes, and that of Augustinians

[7] Pages, 468, 572.
[8] Pages, 591, 492.

is, that according to the latter, God, and according to the former, man, determines who are to be saved."[9]

(4) Dr. Watts is strongly condemned by later Calvinists, because his views logically necessitate an abandonment of Calvinism. The younger Edwards speaking of the state of things in the religious world at the time when his father commenced writing his treatise on the Will, says, "The Calvinists themselves began to be ashamed of their own cause and to give it up so far at least as relates to liberty and necessity. This was true especially of Doctors Watts and Doddridge, who, in their day, were accounted leaders of the Calvinists. They must needs bow in the house of Rimmon and admit the self-determining power (of the will) which once admitted and pursued to its ultimate results, entirely overthrows the doctrines of regenertion, of our dependence for renewing and sanctifying grace, of absolute decrees, of the saints' perseverance, and of all the other doctrines of grace."

A mournful confession truly, but one which unmistakably shows that the fundamental principles of Dr. Watts' theology were Arminian. So far therefore as the solution is to be accepted it simply confirms the position of the Arminian. But what shall be done with the Calvinistic doctrine under consideration? It has not been satisfactorily explained; hence, "it is very hard to vindicate the sincerity of the blessed God, or his Son, in their universal offers of grace and salvation to men, and their sending ministers with such messages and invitations to accept of mercy, if there be no such a conditional pardon and salvation provided for them." At this point I could

[9] "Systematic Theology," Vol. II., p. 330.

dismiss Dr. Watts and his solution ; but if the reader will be patient I should like to investigate this wonderful explanation a little further. Rev. Henry L. Kendall has said, "One detects in the theological writings of Dr. Watts a mingling of the poetical with the logical element. Not only does it add a glow to the style and language, but it also sometimes performs functions of an originative faculty. There are some peculiar theories pertaining to the mysteries of Christianity, the first suggestions of which one could easily fancy had their birth in this part of the author's nature. Perhaps this, also, may serve to explain why some parts of these works were disparaged in the eyes of the early American divines, and why they failed to receive a more hearty acceptance from them. The sinewy New England theology would have for the foundation stone of its new structure, nothing but the solid granite of reason. It looked askance at any idea which had its origin from that other quarter, and asked, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?"[1] If I am not much mistaken, we shall find things which must have come from the poetical nature of Dr. Watts. As we have seen, he earnestly contends for a conditional salvation which is sincerely offered to all. To him, "it is hard to suppose that the great God, who is truth itself and sincere and faithful in all his dealings, should call upon dying men to trust in a Saviour for eternal life, when this Saviour has not eternal life intrusted with him to give them, if they do repent." But strange as it may seem, this is precisely what the great God does if the language of Dr. Watts is accepted as meaning anything : for (1) Dr. Watts declares

[1] "Bib. Sacra," 1875, p. 422, 423

that Christ did not die with an equal design for all men. "It seems evident to me from several texts of the word of God, that Christ did not die with an equal design for all men; but that there is a special number whom the Father chose and gave to the Son, whose salvation is absolutely secured by the death and intercession of Christ."[2] In the light of his other declarations this is a most remarkable statement. Beyond all controversy Christ did die to save the elect—no matter now of whom that class is composed. But if he did not die with an equal design for all men, then surely, he did not die to save the non-elect: hence if he did not die to save the non-elect, for them, there is no salvation: consequently all talk about a conditional salvation offered to all is mere logomachy; the promises of God, are after all, "but a mere amusement," "an empty shew." If the former affirmations of Dr. Watts meant anything more than the usual Calvinistic language—"sufficient for all, but efficacious only for the elect" this unfortunate concession has made them null and void by depriving them of all logical consistency. (2) Let us now see if he fares any better as regards the power of the non-elect to repent. "All the other impotence and inability therefore to sinners to repent or believe, properly speaking, is but moral, or seated chiefly in their wills. It is a great disinclination or aversion in these natural faculties, to attend to, learn, or practice the things of God and religion, and this holds them fast in their sinful state in a similar way, as if they were blind and dead; and I said the final event will be the same, that is, they will never repent without almighty grace;" again, "Their can

[2] "Works," Vol. III., p. 471.

not is their will not; that is, it is the strength of their aversion to Christ, which is a moral impotence or inability to believe in him, and the fault lies in the will."[3]

Fairly considered, I suppose that by this Dr. Watts meant nothing more than that sinners can, but will not repent without the influence of the Holy Spirit. If so, then those who will not so yield themselves to the divine Spirit are lost, and constitute the non-elect whom God could not save: hence when Dr. Watts says: "If the great God, in a way of sovereign mercy, gives some persons superior aids of grace to overcome this moral impotence, and conquer this aversion to God and goodness; if he effectually leads, inclines, or persuades them by his Spirit to repent and believe in Christ, this does not at all hinder the others from exercising their natural powers of understanding and will, in believing and repenting. Nor can anything of their guilt and willful impenitence be imputed to the blessed God, who is Lord of his own favors and gives or withholds where he pleases, and who shall say to him what dost thou?"[4]

One of two things must be true: viz., (1) This statement must be interpreted according to the Arminian principles of Dr. Watts; or (2) If not, then in accordance with the well known Calvinistic theology. If the former is accepted, then all that is meant is, that God gives superior aids of grace to overcome this moral impotence according as he foresees their spirit of free acceptance. If the latter, then not only is Dr. Watts self-contradictory, but the so-called explaination demands elucidation, namely, Why does

[3] p. 478.
[4] p. 479.

God withhold the superior aids of grace from the non-elect? is it because the divine Intention restricts them to the elect? Then the divine Purpose never sincerely offered salvation to the non-elect, and, hence, as Dr. Watts says, "It is hard to conceive how the great Governor of the world can be sincere in inviting and requiring sinners who are on the brink of hell, to cast themselves upon an empty word of invitation, a mere shadow and appearance of support."

Let us now consider the solution of Dr. Venema; he says: "Common grace, of which even those who perish partake, consists in the offer of Christ made in the gospel, an offer which is intended by God to be made to all, and in which no one at least is excluded." Hence he maintains it is possible for all men to believe and be saved. [5]

There is a general predestination or "purpose on the part of God to save those who believe—a purpose which had reference also to those who rejected it." If this be not so, "then we can not hold that God seriously wills that all men should receive the proposition made to them. If, however, he does so will, then it must have reference to all who read or hear it, and the purpose by which he has ordained a connection between faith and salvation must be general. We are aware, indeed, that there is a particular connection (between faith and salvation) which has reference only to the elect: yet this proposition is made to all without distinction. For it would be absurd to suppose that God says to all, Believe and ye shall be saved, and yet that he does not will that they should believe and be saved. . . . . The simplicity and the truth of

[5] "Institutes of Theology," pp, 298, 303.

God forbid us "believing" that God is insincere; this is evident from Matt. xxiii. 37, and Isa. v. 4. "If therefore we would not impugn the sincerity of God we must hold that there is a general decree by which he has purposed to save them that believe."[6] Why are not the non-elect saved? ". . . . . Men abuse the common grace bestowed upon them. If they made a right improvement of that, they might entertain the hope of receiving special grace. . . . . No one certainly will be condemned because he has been predestinated, but because he has neglected the method of salvation which God has disclosed; and, therefore, it is unnecessary to be immoderately anxious in regard to this mysterious doctrine."[7]

That the reader may more readily grasp and comprehend these affirmations, I will add the following résumé: (1) All men are sincerely invited to be saved. (2) Faith is the one condition. (3) The non-elect are condemned because they abuse common grace. (4) By rejecting this view we impugn the divine sincerity.

Superficially considered this position seems quite plausible, but a fair comparison of the above statements with others of Dr. Venema will disclose glaring inconsistencies and unequivocal contradictions. (1) Where is the Scriptural authority for Dr. Venema's assertion that men are condemned because they abuse "common grace"? Where is the passage in which men are told, Believe in, or rightly improve common grace, and you "may entertain the hope of receiving special grace"? Where are the texts proving that

[6] Pages 304, 305, 306.
[7] Pages 303, 295.

there is one way by which the non-elect may entertain the hope of being saved, and a radically different way by which the elect are saved? There are no such conditions in the Bible. The way is one—alike for all—"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." The Master before Dr. Venema. He says the Holy Spirit will condemn the world of sin, because of the abuse of common grace? Oh no, but "because they believe not on me." If faith is the condition of salvation, then beyond all controversy, unbelief is the great sin for which men are condemned. Were it not for the support of a pet theory, our author would never have thought of this unscriptural distinction of common and special grace: but (2) Dr. Venema himself does not really believe, nor teach that the generic reason why men are rejected is because they abuse common grace. Generically their condemnation is a just act of sovereignty irrespective of anything which they have done. "If it be asked why God ordained them to destruction as reprobation is usually understood, we answer, because he foresaw that they would not believe." What! a Calvinist basing the divine decrees upon foresight? This is Arminianism. Wait dear reader and see. "If it be asked on what foundation this foreknowledge rests, we say on God's denying them particular grace."[8] That is, God has ordained the non-elect to eternal destruction because he foresees, because he has determined that they shall not repent. This is the gist of the matter as considered by our author; while believing in a certain order of the decrees, Dr. Venema affirms that "God by a single mental act comprehends the

[8] Page 319.

whole." "The decree, therefore, is one." "The act of the decree is absolute. It is not uncertain or doubtful. It is not suspended on any condition on the part of man." "God determined what the creatures would do, and what their condition would be, who should believe, and who should not, and that his decree regarding them and everything relating to them was absolute." [9]

This is Calvin's doctrine little differently expressed. Doubtless there is a large scope for the non-elect when God has absolutely determined who shall believe: hence, (3) God has never really offered salvation to the non-elect. " . . . . God does not design by what is called a positive act, that all shall believe. In this case all would believe. . . . . He wills only negatively, inasmuch as he does not will that any should not believe." [1] A strange statement. The decrees are really one. From one standpoint they are absolute and positive: from another view they are only negative. But forgetting for a moment the self-contradiction, how is it possible to call God's determination concerning the non-elect, in any sense, negative? There are but two methods of procedure: God may directly influence the non-elect so that they will refuse to believe and repent. This was the view held by Calvin: and he waxes warm as he contemplates the other view, calling it "a silly cavil." To the same effect speaks Dr. Emmons: "It is often thought and said that nothing more was necessary on God's part in order to fit Pharaoh for destruction, than barely to leave him to himself. But God knew that no ex-

[9] Pages 287, 289, 290.
[1] Page 301.

ternal means and motives would be sufficient of themselves to form his moral character. He determined, therefore, to operate on his heart itself and cause him to put forth certain evil exercises in the view of certain external motives." [2]

The other method has been sufficiently indicated by the above condemnations. It is simply that of non-interference. The non-elect are in hopeless bondage: their eternal destruction is certain, unless God gives them saving faith and repentance. This, however, he has determined from all eternity not to do: hence they can not be saved. Let us hear the testimony of Dr. Shedd: "The unconditional decree, in reference to the non-elect, according to Augustine, is one of preterition, or omission, merely. The reprobating decree is not accompanied, as the electing decree is, with any direct divine efficiency to secure the result. And there is no need of any: for according to the Augustinian anthropology, there is no possibility of self-recovery from a voluntary apostasy, and consequently the simple passing by and leaving of the sinful soul to itself renders its perdition as certain as if it were brought about by a direct divine efficiency." [3]

But when God passes by the non-elect, has he not determined to do so? Yes, verily, from all eternity. But is not a determination not to save, a positive act of the divine will? So it would, and does seem to all but a few so-called "mild Calvinists."

There is something more which I am sure will interest the reader. On one page we are informed that

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2 "Works." Vol. II., p. 392.

3 "Hist. of Christ. Doc." Vol. II., pp. 70, 72.

God has a general decree or purpose,—purpose please observe,—"to save those who believe, a purpose which had reference to those who rejected it." Yes, this purpose is so real that our author insists that "God seriously wills that all men should receive the proposition made to them": that is, should receive salvation. But in a few moments we are gravely told that "God does not design by what is called a positive act that all shall believe." Not at all: simply that God has not willed "that any should not believe." We have now obtained a new synonym for "seriously wills." It means a "negative act of the will." God seriously wills that all should receive salvation, but God does not design that all shall believe: hence, says our consistent theologian, "God has purposed by a positive act of his will, not only to condemn unbelievers, but also to withhold from some sufficient grace, on which withholding, as we shall see, when we come to treat of the doctrine of reprobation, depends the final ruin of the impenitent." [4]

This is good Calvinism. I rejoice to see it: here we are told that the final ruin of the non-elect depends upon the withholding of sufficient grace, which withholding God has purposed by a positive act of his will: yet he seriously wills that all should believe and be saved.

(4) Let us now see how Dr. Venema justifies God from the charge of partiality and injustice: "In conferring grace he may act according to his own pleasure, for none can lay claim to what he bestows. In this matter he acts as supreme Lord, who may do what he will with his own, and not as a Judge who has a regard

[4] Pages 277, 278.

to the merit or demerit of those with whom he has to do. In the latter case there would be some ground for the charge of partiality and injustice; but in the former there is none." [5] The following points are worthy of special notice: (*a*) If we consider God as a Judge, who has regard to the merit or the demerit of those with whom he has to do, there is some ground for the charge of partiality and injustice. (*b*) To escape this charge, Dr. Venema tell us that we must consider God as the supreme Lord, who may do what he will with his own. To this I reply that it is impossible to separate the character of God into parts, and say a certain act is right because it is done by him as supreme Lord. Whatever he does, is done by the divine Being as such. No man, I care not what his official position may be, has any right to commit a wrong, and then say—as an excuse for that wrong—"I did it as a King, or an Emperor, or as the President." An outraged public opinion would very soon bring such an offender to his senses, and the condemnation would be the heavier because of the shameless audacity of the culprit. The same general law rules in the sphere of ethics divine as well as human. Without entering into an examination of the vastly important question—reserved for another chapter—Is anything right because God does it? let it suffice for the present to say that the distinction of our author is wholly without foundation, and manifestly absurd.

But again; (*c*) In the Scriptures God is represented as a Judge who does, and is to try, by Jesus Christ, the actions and hearts of all men. Abraham's exclamation, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"

[5] Page 229.

(Gen. xviii. 25) unmistakably shows the native conviction of the race that God is a judge as well as a Father: hence as a fact, God through his well-beloved Son is continually judging "of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb. iv. 12). "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels and then he shall reward every man according to his works" (Matt. xvi. 24). He who could say to the Israelites, "Is not my way equal" is infinitely above such petty subterfuges as adopted by Dr. Venema.

But lastly, (*d*) Our author himself, confesses that God generally adheres to the office of Judge: he says it is right in God to withhold special grace from those who abuse common grace "because he renders to every man according to his works. . . . . We can not now enter upon an explanation of this. But we know generally that God will in his dealings strictly adhere to this rule." [6]

If God strictly adheres to the rule of dealing with men according to their works, then he certainly has "a regard to the merit or demerit of those with whom he has to do": hence God does certainly act as a Judge, and consequently the Calvinistic doctrine under consideration is open to the charge that God is partial and unjust, Dr. Venema's words being the criterion.

In conclusion, it only remains to notice the testimony of Dr. Venema's translator, Rev. Alexander W. Brown. "After the lengthy and ingenious discussion by the author on the subject of predestination, we confess we feel ourselves just where we were. In attempting to reconcile the doctrine of election with

[6] p. 301.

the universality of the gospel offer, and with the expressed unwillingness of God that men should perish, he has only shifted the difficulty ; he has not removed it." [7]

In the opinion of Mr. Brown, the doctrine of absolute predestination must be believed even if it can not be reconciled with the freeness of the gospel offer. [8]

Let us now turn our attention to the vindication adduced by Dr. A. A. Hodge. "In the general offers of the gospel God exhibits a salvation sufficient for and exactly adapted to all, and sincerely offered to every one without exception, and he unfolds all the motives of duty, hope, fear, etc., which ought to induce every one to accept it, solemnly promising that whoever comes, in no wise shall be cast out. The gospel is for all, election is a special grace in addition to that offer. The non-elect may come if they will. The elect will come ;" again. "A salvation all-sufficient and exactly adapted to his necessities is honestly offered to every man to whom the gospel comes, and in every case it is his, if he believes ; and in no case does anything prevent his believing other than his own evil disposition."

Once more Dr. Hodge says, "A *bona fide* offer of the gospel, therefore, is to be made to all men. 1st. Because the satisfaction rendered to the law is sufficient for all men. 2d. Because it is exactly adapted to the redemption of all. 3d. Because God designs that whosoever exercises faith in Christ shall be saved by him. The design of Christ's death being to secure the salvation of his own people, incidentally to the

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[7] p. 334, note.
[8] Ibid.

accomplishment of that end, it comprehends the offer of that salvation freely and honestly to all men on the condition of their faith. No man is lost for the want of an atonement, or because there is any barrier in the way of his salvation than his own most free and wicked will." [9]

I doubt not the reader is now in possession of such facts as will enable him to judge of the Scriptural character of Dr. Hodge's language. Omitting one clause, these quotations seem to express the very ideas of the Bible and for which I am contending, namely, (1) A *bona fide* offer of salvation is made to all men. (2) On the condition that the individual soul will believe in the Saviour. (3) There is no barrier in the way of any man's salvation, except his own free and wicked will. These three points are identical with those of Dr. Hodge, and yet my next affirmation—which is simply a legitimate, and necessary deduction from the foregoing—will necessitate our separation; namely, God saves all who can be saved. Like all Calvinists, Dr. Hodge will instantly reply, This deprives God of his sovereignty, and conditions the decrees on the acts of the creatures.

The truth is, Dr. Hodge does not mean what his language fairly implies, what the average reader imagines such words must signify. This charge of ambiguity I shall now attempt to substantiate. Let the reader carefully notice (1) That Dr. Hodge asserts that there is no barrier in the way of any man's salvation, except "his own most free and wicked will." If this be true, then every man has a fair chance to be saved. To say of a young man that there is no barrier in the

[9] "Outlines of Theology," pp. 182, 317, 316.

way of his obtaining a collegiate education, except his own most free and lazy will, would be generally and properly understood as signifying that he had a good opportunity for securing a classical education. I do not suppose that the underlying truth of the assertion will be fundamentally changed when predicated of salvation, and yet, Dr. Hodge will now deny that all men have a full opportunity of being saved through Christ. Here are his very words: "There is a lurking feeling among many that somehow God owes to all men at least a full opportunity of being saved through Christ. If so, there was no grace in Christ's dying. 'I reject,' says Wesley, 'the assertion that God might justly have passed by me and all men, as a bold, precarious assertion utterly unsupported by holy Scripture.' Then we say, of course the gospel was of debt, not of grace."[1]

Denying that all men have a full opportunity of being saved through Christ, Dr. Hodge flatly contradicts his former assertion that no man is lost . . . . . because there is any barrier in the way of his salvation than his own most free and wicked will."

(2) The so-called condition of salvation by which Dr. Hodge seeks to make it appear that the non-elect may be saved—if they will only believe—is no condition. Like many other Calvinists, Dr. Hodge expatiates upon the possibilities of the non-elect being saved; he distinctly says, "The non-elect may come if they will;" he says God "unfolds all the motives of duty, hope, fear, etc., which ought to induce every one to accept it." "A salvation all-sufficient and exactly

[1] p. 182. Such a false theology is sure to increase the ranks of infidelity.

adapted to his necessities is honestly offered to every man to whom the gospel comes, and in every case it is his if he believes."

Thus Dr. Hodge is constantly seeking to make the impression that the non-elect may believe, and consequently if they do not, it is their own fault. Such is not the fact however. The truth is, the non-elect can not possibly exercise faith and repentance, and therefore, can not be saved. They begin life with their wills inclined to sin, they are so depraved that without a miraculous change wrought in them by God, they can only and forever become worse, and consequently it is rather sarcastic in Dr. Hodge to write so gravely that the non-elect shall be saved if they will only believe. Does the reader desire the proof of this? It is at hand, and from the pen of Dr. Hodge. "The depraved will of man can not originate holy affections and volitions because the presence of a positively holy principle is necessary to constitute them holy. . . . There remains no recuperative element in the soul. Man can only and forever become worse without a miraculous recreation. . . . But he has lost all ability to obey the law of God, because his evil heart is not subject to that law, neither can he change it. . . . . But the moral state of these faculties is such, because of the perverted disposition of their hearts, that they are utterly unable either to will or to do what the law requires. This inability is 'natural' since it is innate and constitutional. It is 'moral' since it does not consist either in disease, or in any physical defect in the soul, nor merely in the inordinate action of the bodily affections, but in the corrupt character of the governing dispositions of the heart. This inability is total, and as far

as human strength goes, irremedial. . . . That repentance, faith, trust, hope, love, etc., are purely and simply the sinner's own acts; but as such, are possible to him only in virtue of the change wrought in the moral condition of his faculties by the recreative power of God." [2]

These extracts are sufficient to show the beautiful consistency of Dr. Hodge. The non-elect are blameworthy for not accepting Jesus Christ, and yet they can not exercise faith, hope, love and repentance until the change is wrought by the power of God. And this is the grand "condition" by which the non-elect are to be saved. No wonder that Luther considered the many declarations in which God exhorts man to keep his commandments, as ironical, "as if a father were to say to his child, 'Come,' while he knows that he can not come."

(3) Why does God refuse to give the non-elect a full opportunity to be saved? Inasmuch as saving faith is bestowed upon the elect—thus putting the condition of salvation within their reach—why does God withhold it from the non-elect? Why should he confer it upon one class, and not upon the other? To say that it is because of the rejection of the Saviour, is to beg the very question in dispute. To say that a blind man who has never seen the sun is worthy of condemnation because he will not open his eyes and look at the glorious orb, may be consistent with Calvinism, but is contrary to the universal sense of justice. Waiving all questions relative to the final condemnation of the non-elect, why should God refuse them "a full opportunity" to be saved? Manifestly there is no

[2] Pages 237, 252, 266, 267, 336.

reason, for prior to the bestowment of saving faith, the elect are no better than the non-elect. Hence there is no reason why the non-elect do not have "a full opportunity of being saved" beyond the good pleasure of God. Says Dr. Hodge "In respect to its negative element, reprobation is simply sovereign, since those passed over were no worse than those elected, and the simple reason both for the choosing and for the passing over was the sovereign good pleasure of God." [3]

This is another gem in the theology of Dr. Hodge. All men have not "a full opportunity of being saved" simply because of the good pleasure of God—the non-elect are worthy of condemnation for rejecting "such a Saviour," when at the same time God withholds from them the power by which they may accept the salvation which "is exactly adapted to the redemption of all."

(4) The offer of salvation to the non-elect is a stupendous farce. Dr. Hodge earnestly contends for the sincerity of the gospel offer to the non-elect. Let the reader turn back a few pages, and such expressions as these will constantly meet the eye. "In the general offers of the gospel God exhibits a salvation sufficient for and exactly adapted to all, and sincerely offered to every one without exception." "A salvation all-sufficient and exactly adapted to his necessities is honestly offered to every man." "A *bona fide* offer of the gospel, therefore, is to be made to all men." Speaking of the design of Christ's death, he says, "It comprehends the offer of salvation freely and honestly to all men on the condition of their faith."

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[3] Page 183.

I do not know what peculiar meaning Dr. Hodge attributes to such words as "sincere," "honest," and "*bona fide*," but I am sure that the usual signification has no place in the above quotations, because (*a*) If God sincerely wished the salvation of the non-elect, he would give them at least "a full opportunity of being saved." (*b*) He would also exert his power in their behalf, for Dr. Hodge informs us "it rests only with God himself to save all, many, few, or none." (*c*) God can not be very sincere in offering salvation to all on the condition of faith, for, says Dr. Hodge, "God never has promised to enable every man to believe." Not having promised to give every man "a full opportunity of being saved" and knowing that without this "full opportunity" the non-elect can not possibly be saved. I doubt not the gospel offer is extremely sincere and honest on the part of him who has declared, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" (Isa. lv. 7). But (*d*) The gospel offers can not be sincere, for God has eternally purposed that the non-elect shall not be saved. Says Dr. Hodge, "The design of God must have been determined by his motive. If his motive was peculiar love to his own people then his design must have been to secure their salvation, and not that of all men. As proved from Scripture . . . . God, in his eternal decree, elected his own people to everlasting life, determining to leave all others to the just consequences of their own sins. Consequently he gave his Son to die for these. He could not consistently give his Son to die for the purpose of saving

the rest. . . . . He designed to save those whom he does save."[4]

Here we reach the conclusion of the whole matter. The doctrine of a Limited Atonement now stands out in all its beauty and consistency. While God never designed to save the non-elect, while he has eternally decreed to leave them without "a full opportunity of being saved," while Jesus Christ did not die for the purpose of saving them, yet at the same time Dr. Hodge would have us believe that these most tantalizing offers of salvation—without a Saviour—are "sincere," "honest," "*bona fide*."

One is at a loss to know which deserves the more pity, the credulity of Dr. Hodge in supposing that his fallacies would be accepted for truth, or his utter disregard for the legitimate meaning of language.

An examination of the solution given by Dr. Nehemiah Adams will conclude this section: "But we will meet the difficulty in the most explicit manner; as to any injustice toward those who are not made willing to repent let us suppose the following case: A teacher is remonstrating with some pupils in circumstances where remonstrance seems the only suitable means of influencing them. Everything is said which a reasonable being would think necessary to effect the purpose, or to make the resistance inexcusable. All is vain. There is an unanimous rejection of the teacher's endeavors. In a private way he calls one and another to him, one by one, and plies him with further considerations, appeals to things in his private history and circumstances, and he gains the submission of a number. This is followed by some

[4] Pages 313, 314.

great advantage which makes these few the objects of envy. Now let us imagine the obstinate and persevering part of the company drawing near to upbraid the teacher, saying, 'Had you employed further influences with us, we too, might have yielded. On you be the blame of our loss.' They would be justly scorned for their impertinence. The teacher did all for them which, as reasonable beings, they could properly ask or expect. He sincerely desired the submission of all. It might have been as easy for him to have subdued them all, one by one, as to have secured the assent of the few. He exercised sovereignty election in what he did. He did not hate any, he did not prefer their continual rebellion, though he chose not to interpose with them all, but to leave some under the influences of truth, reason and their consciences. True, he saw that no one would turn without some special act on his part." [5]

I have quoted at some length in order that the reader might have the precise language of Dr. Adams. It is less involved than that of Dr. Venema, and possibly may be more consistent. Let us see. Dr. Adams has chosen the analogical method: As I said concerning the argument of President Dabney, so I remark here that all I can fairly ask of Dr. Adams is, that his analogy be true in its primary application. If this be so, then I readily grant his position has some degree of plausibility. But if this be not so, if the analogy is radically at fault in that it does not afford a just comparison between the respective parties, then that which is built upon it must be considered null and void. That such is the actual case I now propose to demon-

[5] "Evenings with the Doctrines," pp. 253, 254.

strate; viz., (1) It is assumed that the scholars could have obeyed the teacher; otherwise they were not guilty. But the non-elect have no such power. Speaking of election, Dr. Adams says, "God has resolved that he will rescue a part of mankind from perdition by persuading and enabling them to do their duty."[6] If God enables the elect to do their duty, then before that aid was given they could not have done their duty, in which position the non-elect not only are, but there they forever remain. Dr. Adams distinctly teaches that faith is a gift of God withheld from the non-elect, and therefore all remarks concerning them which are based upon the ability of the scholars are manifestly inadequate:[7] hence (2) The analogy is defective in that it assumes that God, like the teacher, has said and done everything "which a reasonable being would think necessary to effect the purpose or to make the resistance inexcusable." This may be true concerning the scholars: if it is, then as I have said, it is based on the ability of the scholars to yield. Granting this, the scholars were doubly guilty because they not only refused to do that which they knew was right, but they also shut out the additional light afforded by the counsels of their teacher. But this utterly fails when applied to the non-elect. Having no power to believe, it is idle talk to say God says everything "which a reasonable being would think necessary to effect the purpose, or to make the resistance inexcusable." God requires faith of them: but faith is impossible unless conferred by the Spirit. As a reasonable Being God knows this, and therefore it is

6 p. 246.

7 See p. 257.

not true that "everything is said which a reasonable being would think necessary." He absolutely knows that nothing will suffice "to effect the purpose" save the gift of faith, which for certain reasons has been withheld.

(3) One is at a loss to understand why the teacher did not secure the obedience of all. It was not because he could not, for Dr. Adams has informed us that "it might have been as easy for him to have subdued them all, one by one, as to have secured the assent of the few." Certainly, if the obedience of one or more was intrinsically good, I fail to see why that good would have been decreased, if the obedience of all had been secured. Surely it would not have hurt any one; and, judging from my limited knowledge of schools, I should think that both teachers and scholars would have been in a position to have accomplished more and better work.

Was it not because the teacher was better pleased to have some of the scholars continue in disobedience, and therefore did not desire to have all yield to his very reasonable arguments? I beg the reader to dismiss the thought at once. It must not be entertained. Such a suggestion is a libel on the character of this very humane teacher. Besides, has not Dr. Adams distinctly told us that this exceptionally benevolent teacher "sincerely desired the submission of all;" that "he did not hate any, he did not prefer their continual rebellion." Now Webster defines the word "sincere" as follows: "Being in reality what it appears to be; having a character which corresponds with the appearance; not simulated or falsely assumed; true; real." Hence if Dr. Adams has correctly defined the character of this teacher we are sure that he really

desired to secure the obedience of all his scholars. This being so, then, while I confess that this teacher is the strangest of all human beings—for whoever saw a person, having full power to confer an inestimable blessing upon others, and sincerely desiring the same, refusing to exercise that power? I say while this teacher's conduct is profoundly inexplicable, of one thing I am certain, viz., that he had not secretly determined that the finally obstinate scholars should not yield, in any circumstances, to his so-called reasonable arguments: for upon this supposition his,, character would not correspond with the appearance," which correspondence, according to Webster, is necessary to be sincere. We are now in a position to see the radical defect of Dr. Adam's analogy: for

(4) God, unlike the teacher, has positively determined that the non-elect shall not be saved. Dr. Adams, like many others whose views we have considered, is guilty of unequivocal self-contradictions. Of the non-elect he says, " No injustice is done to those who are left: salvation is consistently offered to them, and their state is no worse than though all like them had perished." [8] But if salvation is offered to all, then the offer is intimately related to the divine Will and Purpose. It is a *bona fide* offer, or it is nothing. If the former, then it is simply impossible that God should have determined from eternity, irrespective of the divine foresight of men's rejection, that the non-elect should not be saved. But this is precisely what God has done if we accept the statements of Dr. Adams: for, in the first place, God has never resolved to save all. " God has resolved that he will rescue a part

[8] p. 246.

of mankind from perdition by persuading and enabling them to do their duty." In the second place, "Not one more, not one less will be saved than God purposed." Again, "God purposed from all eternity to do that which he has actually done and is to do."[9] Equally fallacious is our author's remark that "the exercise of God's free and sovereign grace in the conversion and salvation of a part of mankind is the only alternative to the endless sin and misery of the whole."[1]

What extreme folly! As though the whole were less than a part. No such alternative exists save in the perplexed mind of Dr. Adams: for according to his own analogy "it might have been as easy for him to have subdued them all, one by one, as to have secured the assent of the few." Nor do I imagine that this so-called reconciliation was very highly regarded by its author; for, after this wonderful analogy has been given, he remarks, "This Scriptural way of treating divine decrees and free agency is surely safe, namely, to believe them both, and to leave out of view all questions as to their consistency."[2] One can not but wonder why Dr. Adams refused to follow his excellent advice.

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[9] p. 257.
[1] p. 244.
[2] p. 257.

SECTION III.

*Calvinism Teaches that the Non-Elect are Rejected and Condemned Irrespective of their Wicked Deeds or Character.*

On this subject the Bible is very explicit. God is always represented as dealing justly with his subjects. If he sends punishments upon his people, it is because they have departed from his commands. If a soul is rejected, temporarily or eternally, it is because of the great sin of rejecting him from whom all blessings flow. A few from the many passages of the Old Testament will suffice to illustrate the law of equity by which the divine Will is guided. The curse was pronounced upon our first parents because they had disobeyed the commandment, Thou shalt not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen. ii. 17; iii. 16, 17). God's blessings for his chosen people are conditioned upon their diligently hearkening to, and doing that which is right in his sight (Exodus xv. 26). "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live" (Deut. xxx. 19). Saul's temporary and eternal rejection by God was based upon his rejection of the Lord's word. "And Samuel said unto Saul, I will not return with thee: for thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, and the Lord hath rejected thee from being King over Israel" (1. Sam. xv. 26). See also II. Sam. vii. 15. The prolonged drought in the reign of Ahab was because of the many heinous sins of monarch and people. "And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto

him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel? And he answered, I have not troubled Israel; but thou and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and hast followed Baalim" (1. Kings xviii. 17, 18). "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land. But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it" (Isa. i. 19, 20). The words of Jeremiah to his angry countrymen are replete with good common sense and Bible sincerity. "Therefore now amend your ways, and your doings, and obey the voice of the Lord your God: and the Lord will repent him of the evil that he hath pronounced against you" (xxvi. 13). In behalf of him whose ways are equal, Ezekiel says: "Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord God. Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions, so iniquity shall not be your ruin" (xviii. 30).

The same law of equity is even more clearly revealed in the New Testament. "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your heavenly Father forgive your trespasses" (Matt. vi. 14, 15). "Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes" (Matt. xi. 21). The fearful calamities which should surely overtake Jerusalem were pronounced against her because of the obstinate rejection of him whose tears were the sincere expression of a mighty effort to save (Matt. xxiii. 37; Luke

xix. 41–45). "He that believeth on him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (John iii. 18, 19). The extreme wickedness of heathenism is the result—not of God forsaking man, but man's forsaking God. "For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient" (Rom. i. 26, 28). Speaking of God, Paul says, "Who will render to every man according to his deeds" (ii. 6). "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God" (xiv. 12). "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (II. Cor. v. 10). "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them, and

they were judged every man according to their works" (Rev. xx. 12, 13). "And behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be" (xxii. 12).

I shall now attempt to prove that Calvinism unequivocally contradicts the Bible on this subject: that it assigns as the generic reason for the rejection and condemnation of the non-elect the sovereign will of God. I say "generic reason"; for while there is a class of Calvinistic writers who boldly and consistently maintain this doctrine, there is another class who endeavor to escape the dilemma by insisting that Calvinism and the Scriptures agree in teaching that men are condemned for their sins. These we shall consider in due time.

Calvin says, "All are not created on equal terms, but some are foreordained to eternal life, others to eternal damnation; and accordingly, as each has been created for one or other of these ends, we say that he has been predestinated to life or to death."[3] "Esau and Jacob are brothers, begotten of the same parents, within the same womb, not yet born. In them, all things are equal, and yet the judgment of God with regard to them is different. He adopts the one and rejects the other."[4] Hence, in seeking for the cause of the non-elect being rejected, we must not go beyond the divine Will. "Therefore, if we can not assign any reason for his bestowing mercy on his people, but just that it so pleases him, neither can we have any reason for his reprobating others but his will. When God is said to visit in mercy or harden whom he will,

[3] "Inst." B. III., Ch. XXI., Sec. 5.
[4] B. III., Ch. XXII., Sec. 5.

men are reminded that they are not to seek for any cause beyond his will." [5]

The following is from Rev. Richard Crakanthorp. He first refutes the doctrine that men are elected if they will embrace the grace of God: then he condemns the view "that there is none rejected of God till by their own contempt themselves do first reject God and by their willful obstinacy refuse his grace which is offered unto them": then he adds, "How evidently, do these men oppugn the Scriptures of God! For if election and rejection depend on the actions of men after they be born, how can it be true, which the Apostle teacheth, that we are elected before the foundation of the world?" [6]

If election and rejection do not depend on the actions of men after they are born, they certainly do not depend on actions before they are born, and hence they are irrespective of men's actions. Of Jacob and Esau, Matthew Henry says, "The difference was made between them by the divine counsel before they were born, or had done any evil. Both lay struggling alike in the mother's womb when it was said, The elder shall serve the younger: without respect to good or bad works done or foreseen." [7]

Dr. Venema taught that "The decree of withholding peculiar grace is according to God's good pleasure, without any reference to the character of the individual." [8]

In a work entitled "A Defense of Some of the Important Doctrines of the Gospel," Rev. John Har-

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5 Ibid, Sec. 11.
6 "Sermon," pp. 10, 11.
7 Scott's Comprehensive Comt.
8 Inst. p. 320.

rison says, "But it may be said that the reason of God's withholding the means of grace from some, may be their obstinacy and unworthiness; the abuse of the light they had, and a foresight that they would abuse clearer light, if they had it. To this I answer, all men are naturally obstinate and unworthy; and if God deals with men according to their obstinacy and unworthiness, not only some men, but even all men, should be excluded from the means of grace. . . . . It is best therefore to rest in that reason of this procedure assigned by Christ, God's sovereign will of pleasure (Matt. xi. 25, 26)." [9]

Dr. Bennett Tyler says, "One is taken and another left; and the reason why one is taken in preference to another lies beyond our view and is known only to God." [1]

The following from Dr. Chalmers is characteristically bold: "The great bulk even of our orthodox theologians would rather view and express the matter in this way, that those who are not saved are simply left to their own natural inheritance as the children of wrath, and are therefore let alone. 1. Peter, ii. 8, 'Them which stumble at the word, being disobedient, whereunto also they were appointed.' This, too, the adversaries, and also the modifiers of our doctrine, would try to get the better of, by restricting the appointment to the consequences of disobedience, viewing the disobedience itself as the act solely of the creature. Jude 4, 'For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men,' etc. And

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[9] p. 173.

[1] "Lectures on Theology." p. 356.

so of this passage, too, both they who deny, and they who blink our doctrine in the form of reprobation, will tell us that these ungodly were of old ordained not to their ungodliness, but, being ungodly, they were ordained to the condemnation that follows it. I shall give one testimony more, and that perhaps the most difficult of all to be disposed of by those who, in the handling of this argument, would soften the representations of Scripture down to the standard of their own conceptions and their own taste: Rom. ix. 18, 'Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.' This, looked to in connection with the narrative of God hardening the heart of Pharaoh, does seem to imply a counterpart operation to that of the grace which carries into effect the decree of a favorable predestination. Those whom God hath ordained to eternal life, he also ordains to the character that is meet for it; and accomplishes this ordination by the work of the Spirit, who takes the heart of stone out of those whom God hath chosen to everlasting blessedness, and gives them a heart of flesh. And in contrast with this, does it not appear, as if upon those who are the objects of an adverse predestination, he puts forth a contrary operation—not softening, but hardening? And as if there were as much of positive efficiency on the part of God in conducting the one operation as the other, it is likened to the respective operations of the potter over the clay which he moulds at will into vessels of any use or form that pleases him."[2]

Dr. J. B. Mozley in refuting Archbishop Whately's interpretation of the potter's power over the

[2] "Institutes." Vol. II., pp. 396, 397.

clay, says, "Now, it is true that a potter never makes a vessel for destruction; but some vessels are certainly in this passage spoken of as 'fitted to destruction,' others as 'prepared unto glory'; of which destruction and glory the cause is plainly put further back than their own personal conduct, viz., in a certain divine love and wrath, before either side had done any actual good or evil." [3]

Dr. John Woodbridge says, "In his choice of men to the adoption of sons, the peculiar reasons for his preference are always concealed." [4]

"If it be acknowledged that there is any difference between the character and ultimate fate of a good and a bad man, the intellect is logically led, step by step, to contemplate the will of the Creator as the cause of this difference." [5]

## Section iv.

### *The Doctrine Denied, and yet Granted by some Calvinists.*

In the previous sections of this chapter we have been regaled by some Calvinistic inconsistencies. I now propose to give the reader another opportunity of witnessing these theological legerdemains.

"Men will be dealt with according to their characters at the end of life," says Dr. Albert Barnes; again, commenting on Rom. ii. 6, he says, "That is, as he deserves; or God will be just and will treat every man as he ought to be treated; or according to his char-

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[3] "Bib. Sacra," 1879, p. 206.
[4] "Nat. Preacher." Vol. II., p. 132.
[5] "Life of St Paul." Conybeare and Howson. Vol. II., p. 178.

acter. It is not true that God will treat men accordgin to their external conduct ; but the whole language of the Bible implies that he will judge men according to the whole of their conduct, including their thoughts and principles and motives, *i. e.*, as they deserve;" again, on i. 28, "It does not mean that they were reprobate by any arbitrary decree, but that as a consequence of their headstrong passions, their determination to forget him, he left them to a state of mind which was evil and which he could not approve ;" on ix. 33, he says, "Men still are offended at the cross of Christ. They contemn and despise him. He is to them as a root out of a dry ground, and they reject him and fall into ruin. This is the cause why sinners perish, and this only."

In these remarks we are told that men are not reprobated by any arbitrary decree : that God treats, and will treat every one at the end of the world according to their motives, or their characters : that the cause, yea *the only cause* why sinners perish, is their rejection of Christ. Very good : this is the principle of right and according to the spirit and letter of Scripture. Now let the reader compare the above with the following, on Rom. ix. 11, "It was not because they had formed a character, and manifested qualities which made this distinction proper. It was laid back of any such character, and therefore had its origin in the plan or purpose of God." It is simply puerile to say that both of these statements are to be accepted. If an affirmation means the same as a negation, let us throw away all reasoning and become Nescients. If we accept the former statements, we reject Calvinism ; if the latter, what shall we do with the Bible?

Dr. Robt. J. Breckenridge says, "That portion of the human race that will be finally lost we know perfectly, from the Scriptures, will be condemned for their sins and will, in their own judgment, and the judgment of men and angels, as well as in the judgment of God himself, richly deserve their condemnation: nor is it possible to imagine that they would be condemned under any other circumstances. As I have already shown, even the elect are chosen of God from eternity, not in contemplation of them as pure and deserving God's love, but in contemplation of them as polluted, and so as needing the infinite sacrifice of Christ, and the infinite work of the Holy Ghost. . . . It is, therefore, impious and absurd to say that God passes by and reprobates those who will perish in the contemplation of their being pure: they were always polluted from the first moment of their existence: were contemplated as such from eternity: were passed by and reprobated being such: will be condemned as such to all eternity." This is sufficiently explicit. We are told the direct cause why the non-elect are reprobated; viz., for their sins. Yea, so extremely clear is this that Dr. Breckenridge distinctly informs us that it is "impossible to imagine that they would be condemned under any other circumstances." What! under no other circumstances? No, this is not to be imagined, much less postulated. Well then, Dr. Breckenridge has performed impossibilities; for after writing the above, he gravely says, "On the other hand, it will not do to say God passes by and reprobates lost sinners merely on account of their sins, either original or actual: because as to original sin, the elect were as deeply polluted as the reprobate, and as to actual

transgressions, the great glory of the Saviour is that he is able to save unto the uttermost them that come to God by him." [6]

I have heard of, and justly admired Dr. Breckenridge for his power as a preacher; but I now have a new cause for admiring his wonderful imagination which has actually achieved impossibilities. "Original" and "actual sin" exhaust the Calvinistic vocabulary on sin. If, therefore, the non-elect are not reprobated "merely on account of their sins, either original or actual," as our esteemed author affirms they are not, it must be on account of something over and above their sins: which is the very thing impossible to be imagined. Will some kind Calvinistic friend inform us where this unimaginable cause is revealed in the Bible?

The views of Dr. John Gill are somewhat peculiar. He divides the decree of rejection into two parts, viz., preterition and predamnation. "Preterition is God's passing by some men, when he chose others; in this act, sin comes not into consideration, for men are considered as not created, and so as not fallen: it is a pure act of sovereignty. Predamnation is God's appointment or preordination of men to condemnation for sin. God damns men but for sin, and he decreed to damn none but for sin." [7]

Here we have the unscriptural statement that men are passed by, or that God has determined not to save some, for nothing, absolutely nothing; for so far forth,

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6 "The Knowledge of God. Objectively Considered," pp. 5, 15, 16.

7 As quoted by Rev. Daniel T. Fiske in a "Review of Gill's Works." "Bib. Sacra," Vol. XVIII., p. 360.

"sin comes not into consideration"; "it is a pure act of sovereignty."

After having thus determined to "pass by" the non-elect, after having decreed not to give them salvation, God decrees to condemn them for their sins. Where is the passage of Scripture justifying this illogical and manifestly unfair procedure? Beyond all controversy none are appointed to damnation but those previously rejected, and this "passing by" is the basis of the damnatory appointment: consequently the distinction of Dr. Gill does not touch the question at issue. Free from all circumlocution his doctrine is consistent Calvinism, namely, the non-elect are condemned and eternally punished for nothing. If this kind of reasoning characterized the works of Dr. Gill, it is no wonder Robert Hall thought them "a continent of mud."

Dr. Pictet asserts "When any are lost, we do not hesitate to say that they perish by their own deserts, although God could have mercifully saved them had it pleased him." Again he says, "Sin, therefore, is the cause, on account of which God hath passed by some men: for had there been no sin, no man would have been forsaken." This last remark simply skims the surface of the subject. I do not question that sin is the means by which the non-elect are condemned. But, inasmuch as "God could have mercifully saved them, had it pleased him," I desire to know the generic reason why that mercy was not exercised by Him of whom it is said, "I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked." The answer is at hand. Dr. Pictet adds, "Yet if it be asked why one man is passed by and not the other, it can not then

be said that sin is the cause of this difference, since both are equally sinners, and therefore, equally deserving of rejection ; but it must be referred to the sovereign pleasure of God." [8]

Will the reader please carefully notice the following from Dr. John Dick ? "The term predestination includes the decrees of election and reprobation. Some, indeed, confine it to election ; but there seems to be no sufficient reason for not extending it to the one as well as the other; as in both, the final condition of man is pre-appointed, or predestinated. . . . They were appointed to wrath for their sins ; but it was not for their sins, as we have shown, but in exercise of sovereignty, that they were rejected." [9]

If we make any distinction concerning the "appointment" to wrath, and the "rejection," the latter must have the priority ; hence the non-elect are rejected irrespective of anything which they have done. Against this manifest inequality I earnestly protest in the name of him who said, "Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways."

## SECTION V

### *The Doctrine Denied by Some Calvinists, but Logically Necessitated by their Fundamental Position.*

Since the death of the Reformer, Calvinism has been gradually gravitating toward Arminianism. Doubtless the reader has observed this change of base as he has read the previous chapters. The sections of

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[8] "Theology," p. 213.
[9] "Theology," pp. 360, 361.

this chapter are equally conclusive. The early Calvinists, following their leader, positively declared that the non-elect are eternally condemned irrespective of anything which they had done. These were followed by a second class of writers who made the distinction of "appointment" and "rejection," declaring that the former is for sin, while the latter is an act of mere sovereignty. Now, as we shall presently see, there is a third class who persistently affirm that the non-elect are condemned for their sins, or wicked character: all other reasons are carefully omitted from any consideration, so sure are they that this is the cause. The following selections will sufficiently indicate the trend of these milder Calvinists.

Toplady says, "When we say that the decree of predestination to life and death respects man as fallen, we do not mean that the fall was actually antecedent to that decree; for the decree is truly and properly eternal, as all God's immanent acts undoubtedly are; whereas, the fall took place in time. What we intend then, is only this, viz., that God (for reasons without doubt, worthy of himself and of which we are by no means in this life competent judges), having from everlasting peremptorily ordained to suffer the fall of Adam, did likewise from everlasting consider the human race as fallen; and out of the whole mass of mankind, thus viewed and foreknown as impure and obnoxious to condemnation, vouchsafed to select some particular persons (who collectively make up a very great, though precisely determinate number) in and on whom he would make known the ineffable riches of his mercy." [1]

[1] "Works," p. 689.

Charnock says, "Reprobation in its first notion is an act of preterition, or passing by. A man is not made wicked by the act of God; but it supposeth him wicked, and so it is nothing else but God's leaving a man in that guilt and filth wherein he beholds him. In its second notion it is an ordination, not to a crime, but to a punishment (Jude 4) 'an ordaining to condemnation.' And though it be an eternal act of God, yet, in order of nature, it follows upon the foresight of the transgression of man and supposeth the crime." [2]

In "Tracts on the Doctrines, Order and Polity of the Presbyterian Church," Dr. G. W. Musgrave says, "What we do maintain, I repeat it, is, that God has determined to 'pass by' the non-elect, and to permit them to continue in unbelief and disobedience; and foreseeing that if left to themselves they would thus freely and criminally reject his gospel and rebel against his law, he determined to punish them with eternal death for their sins and according to their just deserts." [3]

Of the non-elect, Dr. Wm. D. Smith says, "There is nothing that hinders their salvation but their own aversion to holiness, and their love of sin; and it is for this that God has purposed to damn them." [4]

Dr. N. L. Rice explains the doctrine as follows: "Now Arminians agree with us, that on the day of judgment God will pronounce sentence of eternal condemnation upon multitudes of men. 'Then shall he say unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his

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2 "Attributes of God," p. 492.

3 Vol. III., p. 208.

4 "What is Calvinism?" p. 51.

angels. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment.' Will this fearful sentence be just? Arminians agree with us that it will, because it will be a sentence of merited punishment for their sins. Then can there be any objection to saying, that God purposed from eternity to pronounce this just sentence? He foresaw the sin of the finally impenitent, and for their sin he purposed to inflict upon them the just penalty of his law. Can any one object to this? Can it be unjust in God to purpose to do a just act?" [5]

Dr. Lyman H. Atwater says, "Election is an act of special mercy and grace which chooses some to be rescued out of this doomed mass and made heirs of glory, and insures all the requisites to the fulfillment of this purpose. Reprobation, otherwise called Preterition, is simply the passing by those not thus included in the purpose of election, and leaving them to go on unreclaimed to merited perdition. It is thus a judicial and punitive, and, in this sense, not a merely arbitrary act." [6]

In considering this doctrine the reader will please notice that all these writers agree in declaring that the non-elect are reprobated, or passed by, because of their sins. God "considered the human race as fallen": it is God's "leaving a man in that guilt and filth, wherein he (God) beholds him;" God "determined to punish them with eternal death for their sins, and according to their just merits;" it is for their love of sin "that God has purposed to damn them;" it is "a sentence of merited punishment for their sins;" this preterition is "to merited perdition."

5 "God Sovereign and Man Free," p. 136.

6 "Presby. Quarterly," 1873, p, 165.

But this sentence of condemnation is an eternal act of God, and hence before creation. True. Consequently so far forth, the act of condemnation is based, or grounded upon the divine foresight of the race as fallen. Certainly, for says Toplady, "out of the whole mass of mankind, thus viewed and foreknown as impure and obnoxious to condemnation," God "vouchsafed" salvation to "some particular persons." Charnock declares that the condemnation "follows upon the foresight of the transgression." Dr. Musgrave affirms that God "foreseeing that if left to themselves they would thus freely and criminally reject his gospel and rebel against his law, he determined" to condemn them. Dr. Rice says, "He foresaw the sin of the finally impenitent, and for their sin he purposed to inflict upon them the just penalty of his law." Dr. Atwater says, in a paragraph immediately above the one quoted, that his doctrine "makes election and reprobation act upon the race viewed as fallen, sinful, already deserving and bound over to perdition." Then, beyond all controversy, according to these writers, the act, or decree of reprobation, or preterition "follows," comes after, "the foresight of the transgression."

But so far this is pure Arminianism. I doubt not the reader is sufficiently versed in the doctrines of these two rival systems to know that the above affirmation is literally true. But to place the matter beyond all dispute I will add the necessary proof. In speaking of the doctrine of the Arminians, Dr. Ashbel Green says, "They say that the foreknowledge of God is the ground of his decree." [7]

[7] "Lectures on the Shorter Catechism," p. 178.

"Election and reprobation, as Arminianism holds them, are conditioned upon the conduct and voluntary character of the subjects. All submitting to God and righteousness, by repentance of sin and true self-consecrating faith, do meet the conditions of that election; all who persist in sin present the qualities upon which reprobation depends. And as this preference for the obedient and holy, and rejection of the disobedient and unholy, lies in the very nature of God, so this election and reprobation are from before the foundations of the world." [8]

Thus it is evident beyond all cavil that the Calvinistic theologians whose views lead them to declare that the decree of reprobation follows the foresight of the transgression, have so far, adopted one of the fundamental principles of Arminianism. But does not Calvinism declare that the decrees are one? Yes, verily we are so taught. Dr. Hodge declares "The decrees of God, therefore, are not many, but one purpose." [9] Toplady declares that "the twofold predestination of some to life and of others to death" are "constituent parts of the same decree." [1] Howe affirms "That all the purposes of the divine will are co-eternal. . . . . There can be no place for dispute about the priority or posteriority of this or that purpose of God. They must be all simultaneous, all at once, in one and the same eternal view according to that clear and distinct, and all-comprehending prospect that he hath of all things eternally before his eyes." [2]

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8 Dr. Whedon. "Methodist Quarterly Review," 1879, p. 409.
9 "Systematic Theology." Vol. I., p. 537.
1 "Works," p. 690.
2 "Works," p. 1135.

Consequently, the conclusion is legitimate, yea, irresistible, that if one decree "follows upon the foresight of the transgression of man," if one decree "supposeth" a man wicked, the other part of the decree follows upon a foresight that the soul will repent and believe. Or in other words, the view of these Calvinists is one-half Arminianism, which logically necessitates the other half.

But let us examine the other horn of the dilemma. Is it consistent Calvinism to teach that *any* of the divine decrees are based upon, or follow the divine foresight? This question is vitally important to a correct understanding of the whole discussion. It meets the student of theology at every turn because of the contradictory assertions which are constantly made—either directly or indirectly—by Calvinistic writers. At one stage of the discussion you are told that the decrees are not conditioned, based, or grounded upon anything in man: but presto, change, and now you are told that the doctrine of reprobation is "simply," yes, "simply the passing by those not thus included in the purpose of election, and leaving them to go on unreclaimed to merited perdition." I now propose to show that this is "simply" impossible according to the fundamental position of Calvinism. To avoid needless repetition, the reader is directed to Chapter II. of Part I. He will there find the teaching of Calvinism in answer to the question, Are God's Decrees Conditional? Are they based on the divine foreknowledge? He will there find that from Augustine to Dr. Charles Hodge, Calvinism has always affirmed the unconditional decree as the basis of its system; hence, the Westminster Confession of Faith is histor-

ically correct in saying, "Although God knows whatsoever may or can come to pass, upon all supposed conditions; yet hath he not decreed anything because he foresaw it as future, or as that which would come to pass upon such conditions." Dr. Venema says, "The act of the decree is absolute; not uncertain or doubtful. It is not suspended on any condition on the part of man." If the decrees are not conditioned on anything in man, then it is a waste of time to affirm that the act of reprobation follows upon the foresight of the transgression. If we accept the fundamental position of Calvinism, that God could not know what his creatures would do before he had determined their actions, we must forever banish all thought about the non-elect being condemned, and left to their merited punishment. It is incontestably certain that Calvinism teaches the unity of the divine decrees: the divine foreknowledge, as depending on those decrees, and therefore Calvinism does teach, directly and indirectly, that the non-elect are eternally condemned, irrespective of their foreseen wickedness. The denial of this necessitates Arminianism.

## SECTION VI.

### *The Bible Argument.*

We have already considered some passages of Scripture concerning God's dealings with the non-elect. But as they represent the brighter side of the subject, let us now examine those parts of the Bible which the Calvinist claims in support of his dark and extremely repulsive doctrine of reprobation. I propose to deal fairly with the reader and give him ample

opportunity to see on which side is the truth. For convenience I shall divide the subject into three parts, first examining the passages which declare God's agency in the production of evil. "But the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him" (I. Sam. xvi. 14). See also xviii. 10, and xix. 9. "Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee, out of thine own house, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbor, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun" (II. Sam. xii. 11). "And the King said, What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah? so let him curse, because the Lord hath said unto him, Curse David. Who shall then say, Wherefore hast thou done so?" (xvi. 10). "And Absalom and all the men of Israel said, The counsel of Hushai the Archite is better than the counsel of Ahithophel. For the Lord had appointed to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel, to the intent that the Lord might bring evil upon Absalom" (xvii. 14). "And again the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel and he moved David against them to say, Go, number Israel and Judah" (xxiv. 1). "Wherefore the King hearkened not unto the people; for the cause was from the Lord, that he might perform his saying, which the Lord spoke by Ahijah the Shilonite unto Jeroboam the son of Nebat" (I. Kings xii. 15). "And the Lord said, Who shall persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead? And one said on this manner, and another said on that manner. And there came forth a spirit and stood before the Lord, and said, I will persuade him. And the Lord said unto him, Wherewith? And he said, I

will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And he said, Thou shalt persuade him, and prevail also: go forth, and do so. Now therefore, behold, the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the Lord hath spoken evil concerning thee" (xxii. 20–23). "Wherefore I gave them also statutes that were not good, and judgments whereby they should not live. And I polluted them in their own gifts, in that they caused to pass through the fire all that openeth the womb, that I might make them desolate, to the end that they might know that I am the Lord" (Ezek. xx. 25–26). "Shall a trumpet be blown in the city and the people be not afraid? Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?" (Amos iii. 6). I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil. I the Lord do all these things" (Isa. xlv. 7).

In considering the meaning of these passages notice (*a*) That if we take the exact, the literal interpretation, God must be the author of sin. He who creates evil (sin) must be the author, and therefore we see at once that this can not be the truth. (*b*) At times the term "evil" must be understood as physical instead of moral. Calamities, punishments, death, are often spoken of or alluded to in the Bible as evil from the Lord (See 1. Kings xvii. 20). Thus Cowles on the passage in Amos says, "Shall we not recognize God's agency as including and working all the inflictions of calamity that fall on guilty cities? This 'evil in the city,' which v. 6 assumes that the Lord has done, must be natural, not moral; calamity, not sin. The original Hebrew is used frequently for nat-

ural evil, *e. g.*, Gen. xix. 19: 'Lest some evil take me and I die;' and Gen. xliv. 34: 'Lest peradventure I see the evil that shall come on my father;' also Ex. xxxii. 14. Besides, the strain of the whole passage is of natural evil—the judgment about to come from God on apostate and guilty Israel. To construe this evil, therefore, as being sin, and not calamity, is to ignore the whole current of thought, and to outrage the soundest, most vital laws of interpretation. Moreover, the common justice toward God forbids this construction. 'Shall there be *sin* in the city, and the Lord hath not done it?' This would assume that God is the doer of all the sin in our world."[3]

By observing this legitimate method of interpretation many of the supposed difficulties are at once obviated. Throughout this discussion I have maintained that God does punish individuals and nations according to their wickedness.

As we have seen, this is the doctrine of Scripture. In most of the passages already considered, the reason for the chastisement is clearly stated even before the doom is pronounced.

The strong language in Ezek. xx. 25, 26 is prefixed with the words, "Because they had not executed my judgments, but had despised my statutes and had polluted my Sabbaths, and their eyes were after their father's idols." Are we to wonder that God's punishments were severe? His chosen people had forsaken their Deliverer; had abandoned the true worship to serve idols of wood, silver and gold. "Ah, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters! they have

[3] "The Minor Prophets."

forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward" (Isa. i. 4). In the numbering of the nations by David, we must assume that the people had sinned—for surely God is not a petulant tyrant—angry at, and condemning them without sufficient reason. So far forth there is no difficulty. The mysterious and painful aspects of the problem are in the statement that the Lord moved David to commit this sin. Some light is thrown on the subject by the corresponding passage in 1. Chron. xxi. 1, where we are told that "Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel." From this we are compelled to believe that if God had anything to do with the sin of David, it must have been negatively, in the sense of permission. But if God permitted that, when he could have prevented, does it not follow that after all we must accept it as really the Divine Will? Yes, it seems so to me: consequently I advance the thought that these passages are to be interpreted in the light of the Hebrew conception of Jehovah. If all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, then the Old Testament can not be placed above the New. Beyond all controversy there is a progress of doctrine. That which was at first obscurely revealed, was afterwards more clearly declared: hence it is now universally accepted as an axiom in Bible interpretation that the clear must interpret the obscure. Consequently, the searcher for truth must examine these Old Testament passages in the light of the Epistle of James. "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God can not be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man" (i. 13). Alford says, "The temptation is a trying of

the man by the solicitation of evil ; whether that evil be the terror of eternal danger, or whatever it be, all temptation by means of it, arises not from God, but from ourselves—our own lust. God ordains the temptation, overrules the temptation, but does not tempt, is not the spring of the solicitation to sin." The following from Dr. L. P. Hickok is worthy of careful consideration. "Here is more than mere assertion that God does not tempt to evil ; the declaration has an ample reason given for it. A tempter to evil must himself have been tempted with evil, and this can not be of God. God can not so be tempted, and thus demonstrably God can not tempt any man. If God entices to sin, he must have come to wish sin ; and, as the latter is impossible, the former is necessarily excluded. So categorical a denial of God's temptability to evil, for the sake of excluding him from all complicity with the evil, and shutting out all excuse for sin from the assumption that God tempted to sin, demands careful consideration, if we are clearly to apprehend the reasons which authorize it." [4]

If this reasoning be correct then we are necessarily excluded from interpreting these passages as teaching —directly or indirectly—that God does tempt to evil.

How shall we proceed? As it seems to me, the truth is this. According to the popular conception of the Hebrews, Jehovah did everything. Secondary causes were scarcely recognized. Everything was the manifestation of God, and all events were intimately related to him. Let the reader examine any of the

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4 "Temptation no Excuse for Transgression." "Bib. Sacra," 1873, p. 653. See also, "Bib. Sacra." 1878. Art. "Doc. of the Epistle of James," by Prof. E. P. Gould, D.D.

Psalms and he will readily see this idealistic spirit which prompted the writer to say God "rode upon a cherub, and did fly, yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind. The Lord also thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave his voice; hailstones and coals of fire." As time continued, the perceptive faculties became more active and discriminating, so that gradually, through many ages of moral training, the Christian Doctrine of James is unfolded. For fear the reader may think that this is a mere theory of mine, invented to escape supposed difficulties, I desire to add the views of eminent commentators. In speaking of the true prophet before Ahab, Cowles says, "Micaiah notwithstanding, resumes, to describe another prophetic scene —a kind of cabinet council (of course this is drapery), location not given, to debate the question how to allure Ahab up to Ramoth-Gilead to fall there in battle. . . . . In respect to the morality of this transaction as related to the Lord, it meets no other difficulty than is involved in every case of God's providential agency in the existence of sin—which agency is not a license for sinning—is never the employing of his moral subjects to do the sinning; but is simply leaving the wicked to commit sin of their own free will, his shaping hand being interposed only to turn it to best moral account." [5]

Dr. E. P. Barrows says, "The Scriptures ascribe every actual event to God in such a sense that it comes into the plan of his universal providence; but they reject with abhorrence the idea that he can excite wicked thoughts in men, or prompt them to wicked deeds." [6]

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[5] "Hebrew History," pp. 287, 288.

[6] "Companion to the Bible," p. 541.

The thought which I am seeking to elucidate is thus admirably expressed by Dr. John Tulloch. In speaking of the Old Testament Doctrine of Sin, he says "Facts of evil (*ra*), no less than of good, are traced upwards to the Almighty Will, as the ultimate source of all things. This is true beyond all question ; but it exceeds the truth to say, as Kuenen does, that the older Israelitish prophets and historians did not hesitate to derive even moral evil from Jahveh. Precise distinctions of morality and contingency were unfamiliar to the Hebrew mind ; and at no time would this mind have shrunk from attributing every form of evil accident (however immediately caused by human wickedness) to the Sovereign Power, which did as it willed in heaven and on earth. But it is nevertheless true, as has been clearly seen in the course of our exposition, that the essential idea of evil in the Hebrew mind was so far from associating itself with the Divine Will, that its special note or characteristic was opposition to this Will. The line of later argument, as to a possible relation of the Divine Will to sin (whereby its omnipotence and yet its purity should be preserved) is foreign to the Old Testament. It grasps events concretely ; it does not analyze them in their origin or nature." [7]

Such, in my opinion is the fact, and the correct philosophy—the consistent explanation of the fact, is the Arminian doctrine of Divine Foresight.

God foresees all the free actions of his creatures ; consequently he so arranges the government of the world that wickedness acts upon wickedness. Hence, to the popular conception, God does this or that sin-

[7] "The Christian Doctrine of Sin," p. 96. See Oehler's O. T. Theol. Am. ed., pp. 122-154.

ful deed, whereas, in reality, it is the individual acting out his free wickedness—under the guidance of the Divine Omniscience. In this connection it will be profitable to consider the view of Olshausen who says, "Abstract evil never appears in history; it is but evil personalities, who with their evil deeds, ever appear on the scene: these, however, exist in necessary combination with the work of good, because, in every evil being, and even in the devil and his angels, the powers themselves with which they act are of God, who bestows on them at the same time both the form in which, and the circumstances under which, they may come into manifestation. . . . . Though the whole development and form of evil in the world's history depends upon God, so far as it is he who causes the evil to be evil in that particular form in which he is so, yet the being evil, in itself, is the simple consequence of the abuse of man's own free will. . . . . All evil, in God's hand, serves but for a foil and for the promotion of good, and yet his wrath burns with justice against it, because it originates only in the wickedness of the creature which receives its punishment from righteousness. . . . . Though, therefore, in virtue of his attributes of omniscience and omnipotence. God assuredly foreknows who they are that will resist his grace, and causes them to appear in definite forms in history, he knows them only as persons who, *by abuse* of their own free will, have become evil and continue so." [8]

Let us examine some passages in which God is said to have hardened the heart and to have blinded the eyes of men. "And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, that he shall follow after them; and I will be

[8] "Commentary." Vol. IV. pp. 79, 80, 92.

honored upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host; that the Egyptians may know that I am the Lord" (Exodus xiv. 4). See also chapters vii., viii., ix. "But Sihon, King of Heshbon would not let us pass by him; for the Lord thy God hardened his spirit, and made his heart obstinate that he might deliver him into thy hand" (Deut. ii. 30). Eli says to his wicked sons, "If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him; but if a man sin against the Lord, who shall entreat for him? Notwithstanding, they hearkened not unto the voice of their father, because the Lord would slay them" (1. Sam. ii. 25). "O Lord, why hast thou made us to err from thy ways, and hardened our heart from thy fear? Return for thy servant's sake, the tribes of thine inheritance" (Isa. lxiii. 17). "At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight" (Matt. xi. 25, 26). "But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him; That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them" (John xii. 37–40). "For the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh, even for this same purpose have I raised thee up that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name

might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth" (Rom. ix. 17, 18).

Having no desire to deny the legitimate meaning of these, and other passages, I shall not do as did a minister of whom Professor Park says, that having selected as a text the words, "The Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart," announced as his main proposition, "The Lord did not harden Pharaoh's heart." I readily grant there is a sense in which these declarations are true. It is, therefore, pertinent to ask what are we to understand by these affirmations? I can not accept the usual Calvinistic interpretation, for the following reasons: (*a*) It makes a radical contradiction between God's Will and Command. He tells Pharaoh to do a certain thing, yet does not wish it done. He commands all men to believe, and to be saved, yet he hardens their hearts and blinds their eyes so they will not. (*b*) It contradicts the axiom that "God can not be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man." (*c*) It contradicts other parts of Scripture. God speaks to his people through Jeremiah, saying, "Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other gods whom ye know not; and come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, We are delivered to do all these abominations?" (Jer. viii. 9, 10.) Jehovah solemnly warns his people that their wickedness will not go unpunished. The sacredness of God's house will be no protection against his righteous displeasure. "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." "And they have built the high places of Tophet,

which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire; which I commanded them not, neither came it into my heart" (Jer. vii : 31). Cowles says, "When he says here that he never commanded it, and it had never come into his heart, we must understand him to mean that he had strictly forbidden it, and that it was repulsive and abominable to his heart." In this connection the reader should examine Ezek. xviii, where this Calvinistic idea that God wills one thing but commands the opposite, is unqualifiedly condemned.

As the hardening of Pharaoh's heart is a fair exemplification of the Calvinist's doctrine I will take it as a criterion for other passages. That the reader may judge for himself I shall quote from different authorities of acknowledged ability. Alluding to Jas. i. 13, 14, Moses Stuart says, "With this unequivocal assertion of an apostle before our eyes, an assertion bearing directly on the specific point of internal excitement to do evil, we ought not to take any position which maintains that God operated directly on the heart and mind of Pharaoh, in order to harden him and make him more desperate. . . . . But having advanced thus far, we must go still farther in order to obtain satisfaction as to the point in question. This can be obtained only by a considered and extensive survey of the *usus loquendi* in the Scriptures, with reference to God as the author of all things. There is a sense, in which he is the author of all things, yea, of all actions. He has created all things. Under his control, and by his direction and power, they come into existence. None but atheists will deny this." After considering such passages as Isa. vi. 10, John

xii. 40, Dr. Stuart says, "Here then is one and the same case, which is represented in three different ways. (1) The prophet hardens the Jews. (2) God does the same thing. (3) The Jewish people do it themselves. Is all this true; or is one part contradictory to another? We may safely answer: It is all true. The prophet is said to harden the hearts of the Jews, merely because he is the instrument of delivering messages to them; while they, in consequence of abusing these, become more hardened and guilty. God hardens their hearts, in that by his providence he sustains them in life, upholds the use of all their powers, causes the prophets to warn and reprove them, and places them in circumstances where they must receive these warnings and reproofs. Under this arrangement of his providence they become more hardened and wicked. In this sense, and in this only, do the Scriptures seem to affirm that he is concerned with the hardening of men's hearts."[9]

The orthodoxy of Dr. Jas. G. Murphy, of Belfast, is beyond reproach. His remarks are worthy of careful consideration. "The very patience and moderation which were calculated to subdue a will amenable to reason, only aroused the resistance and vengeance of Pharaoh. Every succeeding step in the procedure of God is dictated by a like consideration and forbearance. Though it be true, therefore, that God did harden Pharaoh's heart, yet it was by measures that would have disarmed the opposition and commanded the acquiescence of an upright mind." On chap. ix. 12, he says, "Here it is to be observed that the very means that would have brought an unbiased and un-

[9] "Com." on Romans, pp. 634, 635, 636. Sixth Ed., 1857.

clouded mind to conviction and submission only begat a stolid and infatuated obstinacy in the monarch of Egypt. The course of the divine interposition has been one of uniform mildness and forbearance, only proceeding to judicial chastisements when negotiation would not avail, and advancing gradually to severer measures only when the more gentle were disregarded. His obduracy is now come to such a pitch of stupidity that we can not catch a shadow of reason for his conduct;" On the words "But for this cause have I raised thee up," our author remarks: "Not stricken thee down with the pestilence, but preserved thee from it in my longsuffering patience." [1]

As this event is described in Romans, Olshausen thinks that Paul "means that God permitted that evil person, who of his own free will resisted all those workings of grace which were communicated in rich measure even to him, to come into manifestation at that time, and under these circumstances, in such a form that the very evil that was in him should even serve for the furtherance of the Kingdom of The Good and the glory of God" [2]

Prof. Cowles thinks that "the well-known proclivities and activities of a proud, stubborn, human heart," are sufficient to satisfactorily account for the conduct of Pharaoh. "If it be still argued that the very words declare, 'God hardened Pharaoh's heart,' the answer is; God is said to do what he foresees will be done by others and done under such arrangements of his providence as make it possible and morally certain that they will do it. Joseph said to his brethren

1 "Exodus," pp. 74, 97, 98. Ed. 1868.
2 "Com." p. 94. Ed. 1861.

(Gen. xlv. 5, 7, 8), 'Be not angry with yourselves that ye sold me hither, for God did send me before you to preserve life. So now it was not you that sent me hither but God.' Yet it is simply impious to put the sin of selling Joseph into Egypt over upon God. God did it only in the same sense in which he hardened Pharaoh's heart. He had a purpose to subserve by means of the sin of Joseph's brethren: and he did no doubt permit such circumstances to occur in his providence as made that sin possible and as resulted in their sinning, and in the remote consequences which God anticipated. . . . . Nothing can be more plain than the revelations of Scripture concerning God's character as infinitely pure and holy—as a Being who not only can never sin himself, but can never be pleased to have others sin, and above all can never put forth his power to make them sin. God can not be tempted with evil, 'neither tempteth he any man.' When he declares so solemnly and so tenderly: 'O do not that abominable thing which I hate,' shall it still be said, But he puts men to sinning; pushes them on in their sin; inclines their heart to sin and hardens them to more and guiltier sinning? Never!'' [3]

If the reader will carefully compare Matt. xi. 25, 26, with 1. Cor. i. 18–26, he will see two things, viz., that Jesus was thanking the Father for a spiritual religion; a religion which was to be apprehended by faith and not by sight. As a consequence of this spirituality, it was, is, and must needs be, hid unto those, who, through self-righteousness think they have no need of a Saviour. Gess as quoted by Godet in "Luke" admirably says, "To pride of knowledge, blindness is

[3] "Pentateuch," pp. 202, 203, 204.

the answer; to that simplicity of heart which wishes truth, revelation."

It is now in order to consider the words of Paul, "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?" (Rom. ix. 21). The thought is partially revealed in Isa. xxix. 16; xlv. 9, and lxiv. 8; but in these passages the prophet seeks to disclose the guilt and extreme folly of denying God's authority as Creator. Hence Paul's illustration is generally referred to Jer. xviii. 6, "O house of Israel, can not I do with you as this potter? saith the Lord. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in my hand, O house of Israel."

Unless, we have positive knowledge to the contrary, it is fair to suppose that Paul used this illustration according to its historical meaning. As thus given by Jeremiah what is its legitimate teaching? The prophet is told to go down to the potter's house, where he saw him at work on the wheels. "And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter; so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it." Then comes the divine warning, "O house of Israel, can not I do with you as this potter? saith the Lord. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel."

Now, laying aside all prejudice, let us see if we can find the prophet's meaning. Notice (1) The potter changed his mind: he started to make something but so far forth, failed. Then he made something else. (2) The *reason* for this change was outside of the potter: he is not represented as changing for

some unrevealed, mysterious reason, but the cause for the change is emphatically affirmed, viz., the temper of the clay. (3) This changed temper necessitates the changed purpose, and this is according to the potter's will. Now I do not expect every Calvinist will concede these points, but I challenge him to prove their incorrectness. So far from affording him any ground for his doctrine the passage directly condemns his position. Two important truths are here taught; viz., (*a*) God's power. He can plant, pluck up, or destroy: (*b*) This power is used according to the temper of those with whom he has to deal: hence he says through the prophet, "If that nation against whom I pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it. If it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good wherewith I said I would benefit them." "Let it be noted that this illustration is not used here to show that God makes and moulds the free moral activities of men, even the free action of their will, according to his absolute pleasure, allowing them no more responsibility or activity than the clay has in the potter's hand. This is neither asserted nor implied here. This is not by any means the point of the comparison; but the point is, as we shall soon see, that God can speak concerning a nation to pull it down and destroy it, or to build it up, and instantly the agencies of his providence prove themselves perfectly adequate for this result. . . . . Note that God does not represent his power as in such a sense arbitrary and sovereign, that it has no respect to the moral state

of his creatures. The very opposite of this is true. God shows that he exercises his agency so as to meet their moral state precisely, sparing the penitent and destroying the incorrigibly wicked." [4]

As this is the true teaching of the passage it is more than probable that Paul used it in its historical application, viz., the rejection and acceptance of nations. It is conceded by eminent Calvinists that in the ninth chapter of this Epistle, Paul's primary object is to elucidate how, or for what reason, the Jews as a nation were rejected. Bloomfield says, "Strange some can not or will not see that in all this (comp. Gen. xxv. 23) there is only reference to the election of nations, not of individuals; a point on which all the fathers up to Augustine (a slight authority, owing to his ignorance of the original languages where idioms are concerned) and all the most judicious modern commentators are agreed." Dr. Charles Hodge says, "With the eighth chapter the discussion of the plan of salvation, and its immediate consequences, was brought to a close. The consideration of the calling of the Gentiles, and the rejection of the Jews, commences with the ninth, and extends to the end of the eleventh." Dr. MacKnight says, "Although some passages in this chapter which pious and learned men have understood of the election and reprobation of individuals, are in the foregoing illustration interpreted of the election of nations to be the people of God, and to enjoy the advantage of an external revelation, and of their losing these honorable distinctions, the reader must not, on that account, suppose the author rejects the doctrines of the decree and fore-

[4] Cowles.

knowledge of God. These doctrines are taught in other passages of Scripture; see Rom. viii. 29." Alford says, "It must also be remembered that, whatever inferences, with regard to God's disposal of individuals may justly lie from the Apostle's arguments, the assertions here made by him are universally spoken with a national reference. Of the eternal salvation or rejection of any individual Jew there is here no question." Dr. Schaff in Lange says, "The doctrine of the predestination of a part of the human race to eternal perdition by no means follows from the statements of these verses, 6–13." Again, "The Apostle is not treating here at all of *eternal* perdition and eternal blessedness, but of a temporal preference and disregard of nations in the gradual historical development of the plan of redemption, which will finally include all (Chap. xi. 25, 32), and hence the descendants of Esau, who stand figuratively for all the Gentiles." [5]

It is, therefore, reasonably settled that Paul used the illustration of the potter in the same sense as did Jeremiah; but this, instead of proving the Calvinist right, unmistakably condemns him; for beyond all legitimate controversy, the passage teaches that the clay "is a living free agent, the Potter is a wise, impartial divine Reason, and the being made a vessel of honor or dishonor is conditioned upon the voluntary temper and doing of the agent. Salvation and damnation depended upon a momentous pivotal *if;* the two alternatives of that *if* were, 'turn from evil' and salvation; or, 'do evil' and destruction." [6] This must

[5] Page 328.
[6] Dr. D. D. Whedon.

be so. Whatever reference this chapter has to eternal salvation must be interpreted according to the primary meaning of the prophet. As God deals with nations according to their temper or disposition, so does he act toward individuals in their eternal acceptance or rejection. To deny this is to affirm that a primary application is of less importance than a secondary. Dr. Howard Crosby is an acceptable minister of the Presbyterian Church. The following is his testimony concerning the meaning of this so-called Calvinistic proof-text. He says, "This text is quoted by many as showing that God arbitrarily makes some men for heaven and others for hell. The whole of God's gospel is thus set aside. He wishes all men to be saved (I. Tim. ii. 4). He does not wish any to perish (II. Pet. iii. 9). God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (John iii. 16). He sent his servants to preach the gospel to every creature (Mark xvi. 15). Jesus says to all, 'Come unto Me' (Matt. xi. 28). And yet some would have this one text in Rom. ix. 21 overthrow the whole tenor of the gospel, as above illustrated. Is it not wiser to imagine a false exegesis here?

"Let us see what this text means? The simile of the potter is taken from Jer. xviii. 1–10; and we must go there if we would see the apostle's meaning. In that passage the Lord says that he, as a potter, will cast away the vessel which was marred under his hands and make a new one—that is, he will set aside the Jews and establish a Gentile church. The whole argument of the apostle concern the rejection of the Jews from being the church of God, and has no refer-

ence to individual salvation. He shows that God narrowed the church seed in Isaac and in Jacob, and he can now change it again from Israel to the Gentile world; that there was no obligation to keep the line of ordinances in Abraham's seed, and that the conduct of Israel, in rejecting Christ, had made it necessary for God, after much patient endurance (ver. 22) to cast off Israel and form a new church. In the course of the argument he answers the objection that God was unrighteous, by showing (vs. 14–18) that to Moses, who was obedient, he showed mercy, and Pharaoh, who was rebellious, he hardened (by letting him harden himself). He distributes his mercy and his wrath as he will; but his will is interpreted as distinguishing between the obedient and disobedient. The potter is referred to, not as from the first ordaining a man to dishonor, but as devoting *a bad* man to dishonor. The figure can not be pressed. The vessels, in the making, have a power to resist the potter. The Jews resisted God's grace when he would have made them to honor, and therefore he made them to dishonor. That is all this text teaches. To read it without regarding the apostle's argument in the ninth and tenth chapters, and without regarding Jeremiah's meaning, from whom the allusion is drawn, is to wrest Scripture and make a most horrible and unscriptural doctrine—a doctrine which, logically and imperatively, makes God the author of sin." [7]

The last class of passages to which we will turn

7 "The Preacher and Homiletic Monthly," 1881, pp. 350, 351. Article, "Light on Important Texts." The question involved in this passage virtually settles the whole subject. Considering the position of Dr. Crosby, his ability as an exegete, his well-known conscientiousness, his interpretation is peculiarly valuable.

our attention is composed of such texts as speak of the non-elect as foreordained to destruction. "Unto you therefore which believe he is precious; but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient; whereunto also they were appointed" (1. Pet. ii. 7, 8). "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation; ungodly men, turning the grace of our God unto lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ" (Jude 4).

The Arminian finds no trouble with these passages. If wicked men will not repent, will not turn to God and live, then, like Judas, they shall go to their own place. God, foreseeing this, unerringly knowing their ultimate choice has eternally rejected, and in this sense, foreordained them to destruction. Dr. Thomas W. Jenkyns' comments on the passage in Peter are admirable. "God exhibits his Son as the foundation of salvation to men. In this character 'he is disallowed of men'—they will not submit to it, but are 'disobedient' to the arrangement. As they will not comply and obey, they stumble and fall and perish, and that according to the 'appointed' order of the provision. Are we from this to infer that they were appointed to disobey and stumble? What! that they were appointed to disallow Christ, and yet be blamed and punished for it? The passage teaches no such thing. It is an 'appointment' of the constitution of providence that whosoever will not eat food will die." [8]

[8] "The Extent of the Atonement," p. 222.

## CHAPTER V.

### The Foreknowledge of God. How Related to His Will.

" . . . . He is a being, not who computes, but who, by the eternal necessity even of his nature, intuits everything. His foreknowledge does not depend on his will, or the adjustment of motives to make us will thus or thus, but he foreknows everything first conditionally, in the world of possibility, before he creates, or determines anything to be, in the world of fact. Otherwise, all his purposes would be grounded in ignorance, not in wisdom, and his knowledge would consist in following after his will, to learn what his will has blindly determined. . . . . If, then, God foreknows, or intuitively knows, all that is in the possible system and the possible man, without calculation, he can have little difficulty, after that, in foreknowing the actual man, who is nothing but the possible in the world of possibles, set on foot and become actual in the world of actuals. So far, therefore, as the doctrine of Edwards was contrived to support the certainty of God's foreknowledge, and lay a basis for the systematic government of the world and the universal sovereignty of God's purposes, it appears to be quite unnecessary."

—*Rev. Horace Bushnell, D. D.*

## CHAPTER V.

## The Foreknowledge of God. How Related to His Will.

This is the last stronghold of Calvinism. We have examined the different positions of this system of theology in the light of Scripture and have found them radically defective. Calvinists not only contradict themselves, but they are led to deny the fundamental utterances of that Word which was given to man for his spiritual comfort and guidance. Compelled to forsake the field of limited atonement, infant condemnation, faith as a direct gift of God, and reprobation as an act of pure sovereignty, the Calvinist has now intrenched himself behind the breastworks of Divine Foreknowledge, confidently believing that here at least is a citadel which can not possibly be taken. This, however, I propose to do, and hence in this Chapter I shall endeavor to show that the Calvinistic doctrine of Foreknowledge is not, and can not be the doctrine of the Bible.

### SECTION I.

### *Is Divine Foreknowledge Possible?*

The term foreknowledge of God refers to the divine omniscience of what his creatures will freely do in time. It is the knowledge of that which is to be. We know events only as they have occurred, or are

transpiring, whereas, to the divine Mind they already exist; hence he knows them before they actually occur.

Some theologians, however, deny this divine foreknowledge on the ground that its acceptance necessitates the denial of human freedom and responsibility. Thus we are told by Weisse "God knows the future in so far as it follows with organic necessity out of the past and present, but he does not know it in so far as, while resting upon the general ground of this necessity, it is yet subject to the spontaneity of the intra-divine and the extra-divine nature, that is, to the freedom of the intra-divine and the extra-divine will." [1]

Martensen says: "An unconditional foreknowledge is unquestionably inconsistent with the freedom of creatures in so far as freedom admits of discretionary choice; it unquestionably precludes the undetermined, which is in fact inseparable from the notion of a free development in time. Only that reality which is *per se* rational and necessary can be the object of an unconditional foreknowledge, but not that reality which might have been otherwise than as it is; for this latter can be foreknown only as a possibility, as an eventuality." [2]

To the same effect speaks Rothe. "If God infallibly foreknows with apodictic certainty, all the actions of men, then these actions must be absolutely certain beforehand; but (seeing that, as being partially discretionary, they can not rest absolutely on inner necessity) they could be absolutely certain beforehand only

[1] "Philos. Dogmat." Vol. I., p. 609.
[2] "Christl. Dogmat." (2d edition) p. 249.

through a divine predetermination: but this would not only preclude the free self-determination of man, but also make God the author of sin. That which in God's knowledge stands objectively fixed, can not be for man, in his present unperfected state, a matter of free determination; the absolute foreknowing on the part of God, of the actions of as yet not perfected personal creatures is unavoidably a predetermining of the same."[3]

To this class of thinkers belongs Dr. L. D. McCabe. While his works, "The Foreknowledge of God, and Cognate Themes," and "Divine Nescience of Future Contingencies a Necessity," present some original features as to the methods of reconciliation, his conclusions substantially agree with those of Rothe and Martensen; his peculiarities will be noticed as we proceed. While I can not expect to give an exhaustive exposé of the different theories against the Arminian doctrine of God's foreknowledge, yet a spirit of fairness constrains me to present a clear outline of the doctrine of divine nescience. Rothe's view is as follows:

"5. The notion of a divine predetermination of all things precludes effectual will-determinations on the part of the creature, and hence, renders earnest personal effort at such determinations a psychological impossibility.

"6. The traditional makeshift to safeguard creatural freedom, namely, by saying that God foresees free actions as free, not only fails of its purpose, but also places God in an absurd relation of dependence on his

[3] "Theological Ethics." Translated by Professor J. P. Lacroix, to whom I am indebted for the extracts from Weisse and Martensen. "Bib. Sacra," 1875, pp. 138, 149, 150.

supposed foreknowledge of the manner in which creatures will act, in his constructing of his world plan.

"7. There are two essentially different phases of freedom: first, in morally imperfect beings; second, in the morally perfected. The actions of the second class can be absolutely foreseen by the Infinite Mind, for such beings will always act according to absolute right. Given a specific moral environment, and their actions will correspond thereto with moral necessity. There will no longer be any scope for discretion. They will always follow the highest motive. But the actions of the first class, so long as they have not as yet attained to absolute perfection in kind, are subject to subjective discretion or caprice, and hence can only be pre-conjectured.

"8. The formula, that God foreknows future free actions *as free*, involves a self-contradiction. The free, in the sense of the discretionarily free, can not in the nature of the case be foreknown.

"9. To predicate of God the non knowing of future free creatural actions, is not to limit the divine omniscience. Even as omnipotence is not an ability to work the self-contradictory (*e. g.*, that two units are as many as five), so omniscience is not an ability to know the *per se* unknowable. Omniscience knows all possible objects of knowledge; namely, all the past, all the present, and all the future so far as it is logically contained in causes now in operation, and which will not be interfered with in the future,—but nothing farther.

"10. To presuppose the divine foreknowledge of absolutely everything, sacrifices the freedom of God. It implies that all that is to be is already absolutely objectively fixed, and hence, that God has absolutely

chained his own hands from all eternity, having once and for all set the universe upon the grooves of necessary sequence, and having sketched out in an immutable scheme all the exercises of his freedom in which he will dare indulge himself in the whole scope of eternity.

"11. The presupposition of a divine foreknowledge from eternity, of absolutely everything, leaves to God, during the lapse of the whole sweep of universal history, no other role than that of an idle spectator.

"12. To make the divine world-plan dependent upon the foreseen actions of creatures, is to reverse the proper relation of dependence between God and the creature. This plan is, in this view, not a broad, solid road leading through the course of world-history, such as the Infinite Mind might have preferred it, but it is a narrow, tortuous, oft-interrupted outline, abounding in special provisions, trap-doors, ambuscades, checks, hedges, and other specifics, such as God foresaw would, from time to time, become necessary, in that he foresaw that here and there his creatures would choose this or that abnormal course of action.

"13. The only possible method of solving the contradiction between the traditional form of the doctrine of omniscience and the real admission of creatural freedom is to modify our conception of the doctrine of omniscience in such a manner as that it shall not include an absolute knowledge of so much of the future as depends on the choice of imperfect moral creatures.

"14. The religious interest calls for this modification. On the hypothesis that the future fate of all men stands already objectively fixed in the foreknowl-

edge of God, real and earnest prayer on the part of man becomes psychologically impossible." [4]

It must be confessed Dr. Rothe has made the difficulties of the old view quite formidable. Doubtless there are difficulties in all of the so-called methods of reconciling the omniscience of God with the free actions of men; hence, the question is not, What view presents no difficulties? but, What theory or supposition presents the least difficulty? If, on a fair examination, the views of Rothe seem to be more in accordance with the truths of reason and Scripture, they deserve, and shall have, my cordial acceptance. I will not presume to think that my observations on this perplexing subject will prove satisfactory to all readers; but I would respectfully ask a careful consideration of the following strictures on the solution of Dr. Rothe.

(1) To what extent does Dr. Rothe predicate moral perfection of free human creatures?

Suppose we grant the truthfulness of the seventh proposition that the divine foresight may be affirmed of the actions of the morally perfected, the question instantly presents itself, At what stage of the Christian life is a person morally perfected? So far as I can learn Dr. Rothe does not inform us: we can, therefore, only tell approximately. Doubtless if there is such a thing as moral perfection—in the sense of Dr. Rothe, where a being "will always act according to absolute right"—it is attained at different ages, according to the person's native disposition, circumstances and opportunities. But in all seriousness is there such a moral perfection? We have heard much

[4] A *resume* of Rothe's view by Prof. Lacroix "Bib. Sacra," 1875. pp. 155–157.

of "Christian Perfection," "Holiness," "Sanctification," not only from the many works published by the Methodist Episcopal church but also from the noble men of Oberlin, but I have yet to see or hear of a work of any recognized authority teaching a moral perfection, possible or actual, in which "beings will always act according to absolute right." Beyond all controversy, if these words mean anything they unqualifiedly assert that after the attainment of this moral perfection the soul never sins,—no, not in the slightest degree, otherwise he would not always act according to absolute right. The following testimony is from Dr. J. T. Crane who is in a position to know whereof he affirms: "Though faith may never utterly fail, nor love grow cold, nor obedience be forgotten, nor devotion die, yet the most faithful, devotional, and obedient child of God will humble himself in the dust at the remembrance of his infinite obligations to his Creator and Redeemer, and the poor returns which he is making. Thus, if we assume that the intent is right and the purpose all-controlling, the service will be imperfect, marred in its character by lack of knowledge and error of judgment, and deficient in degree; and sinless obedience, in the absolute sense of the term, is utterty impossible. . . . . Wesley repudiated the doctrine, declaring that he never used the phrase 'sinless perfection' lest he should 'seem to contradict himself.' He steadfastly held that the holiest of men need Christ to atone for their omissions, shortcomings, and mistakes in judgment and practice, all of which he pronounces 'deviations from the perfect law.'"[5]

[5] "Meth. Quarterly Review." 1878, p. 692.

President Jas. H. Fairchild in speaking of the doctrine of sanctification at Oberlin remarks, "There is no promise in God's Word upon which a believer can plant himself in present faith, and secure his stability in faith, and obedience for all the future, so that we can say of him that he is permanently sanctified." [6]

Where is the Old, or New Testament saint of whom it may be said, he had attained unto that moral perfection that he always acted according to absolute right? To be sure, "Enoch walked with God and he was not, for God took him." But if this was a divine seal of his moral perfection, it should equally apply in the translation of Elijah, who, while one of the noblest prophets was somewhat distrustful of God's care. The truth is, this moral perfection does not, and can not exist on the earth; hence, according to Rothe's dictum, it is not to be affirmed of the divine foreknowledge.

(2) Rothe's solution does not escape the same difficulties which he predicates of the accepted theory. If this objection is true, his entire argument is seriously impaired. In my opinion such is the fact. It is susceptible of verification in three different ways, namely: (*a*) In proposition six we are told that to say God foresees free actions as free, "places God in absurd relation of dependence on his supposed foreknowledge of the manner in which creatures will act, in his constructing his world-plan." Beyond all dispute, the Arminian theology conceives the divine foreknowledge as the ground of God's moral government. The Arminian affirms that in the natural world God has acted and does act independently; but that so far as he

[6] "Cong'l Quarterly," 1876, p. 249.

is related to moral beings, his moral government is conditioned on the free acts of his creatures. As I understand Dr. Rothe he calls this "absurd." But let us see if his view is not liable to the same charge? By "world-plan" must be meant the whole plan of God: this plan, so far as it concerns moral beings is, or is not conditioned upon the free acts of moral creatures. If unconditioned, we have the doctrine of absolute determination which forever precludes all idea of moral freedom. This our respected author can not accept: he is an earnest advocate of moral freedom: Consequently the "world-plan" in its moral relations, is conditioned. Yes, to be sure: this is granted by Rothe: "This world-plan settles immutably the world-goal, as well as also the organic series of logically necessary stages and development crises through which the world can be brought to this goal. More than this is not predetermined. Most emphatically the individual self-determination of personal creatures is not infringed upon by the divine world-plan."[7] Hence the conclusion is irresistible that even on the theory of Dr. Rothe, God is dependent on the free actions of human creatures. The *fact* is the same, while the method is different. Nay, of the two suppositions let the reader judge which is the more absurd. Dr. Rothe says, God does foresee some—the actions of those morally perfected, who always act according to absolute right. Is he not so far forth dependent? Dr. Rothe says that God can, and probably does closely calculate on what the free actions of men will be. Is he not so far forth dependent? Again he says, "However fortuitous and capricious may be the play of self-

7 "Bib. Sacra," 1875, p. 141.

determining creatural causes in the world, nevertheless God (to whom nothing unprovided for or surprising can happen) constantly embraces with his all-comprehending vision, the whole complex web of individual volitions, beholds its bearing upon the plan of his world-government, and has it, at every moment and at every point in the unlimited power of his omnipotence, so that he can irresistibly turn and direct it, as a whole, as is at any time required by its teleological relation to his unchangeable world-plan."[8] Dr. Rothe agrees with the Arminian that the moral government of God is conditioned on the free actions of human creatures: but thinks a partial foresight, a close calculation, and an infinite watchfulness and unlimited power, which can not be surprised nor overcome, less absurd than an unerring foresight which at once does away with all calculations, and at the same time possesses all the necessary watchfulness and power. (*b*) So far as Rothe grants any divine foresight, and so far as the Infinite Mind can calculate, in the same proportion is his view liable to the same charge which he makes against the accepted theory in proposition ten, viz., "To presuppose the divine forknowledge of absolutely everything, sacrifices the freedom of God." This is evident at a glance. If the freedom of God is sacrificed by his foreknowing everything, then it is sacrificed in the exact proportion as he foresees the actions of those morally perfected, and also as he can make a close calculation of what free creatures will do.

(*c*) The same line of argument is legitimate concerning proposition eleven: viz., that the Arminian doctrine "leaves to God, during the lapse of the

[8] p. 141

whole sweep of universal history, no other role than that of an idle spectator." Supposing this to be true, and supposing that the number of those morally perfected, is any perceptible percentage of the human race, then so far forth, God is an idle spectator. Then so far forth as the Infinite Mind can calculate what the actions of men will be, he is also an idle spectator. In a word, when Dr. Rothe confesses that God has some foresight, and also possesses a marvelous power of calculation, he has exposed himself to the same line of argument with which he seeks to demolish the accepted doctrine.

(3) Dr. Rothe's objections against the Arminian doctrine are not consistent. In the eleventh proposition we are told that the accepted doctrine of divine foreknowledge, "leaves to God, during the lapse of the whole sweep of universal history, no other role than that of an idle spectator": but in the following proposition, we are informed that the same doctrine necessitates "a narrow, tortuous, oft-interrupted outline, abounding in special provisions, trap-doors, ambuscades, checks, hedges, and other specifics, such as God foresaw would, from time to time, become necessary, in that he foresaw that here and there his creatures would choose this or that abnormal course of action." One of these charges must be false; for surely to "interrupt" anything, to have "special provisions," to use "trap-doors, ambuscades, checks, hedges, and other specifics" as occasion required is not to be "an idle spectator"; but

(4) Dr. Rothe is mistaken in thinking that the Arminian doctrine legitimately leads to the conclusion that God is an idle spectator. Arminians believe

that of all possible things God has chosen the best. That in the sphere of morals he has adopted such measures as will ultimately secure the highest happiness of the greatest possible number. That knowing by his unerring foresight what his creatures will freely do and become in time, he has arranged all things accordingly: hence, in a certain sense which is eminently praiseworthy, God does interrupt, or change the current of the world's history—by special provisions, or checks: not that his plan of the world's government is changed, but that these changes are strictly in accordance with the foreseen actions of men actually occurring in time: in the elucidation of this thought Dr. Whedon has forcibly said, "Let us, as a theodicic illustration, suppose that a perfectly good and wise prince, absolute in authority, rules over as many tribes and nations as Persian Xerxes; the large share of whom are hostile to each other, and desperately depraved. His plan is not to destroy, nor to interfere with their personal freedom, but so to arrange their relations to each other as that he may make them mutual checks upon each other's wickedness: that the ambition of one may opportunely chastise the outrage of another; that those wrongs which will exist may be limited and overruled; and that even the crimes which they will commit may further his plans of reformation, gradual perfectability, and highest sum total of good. If it is seen that a traitor will assassinate, be the victim in his way one whose death will be a public benefit; if brothers (as Joseph's) will envy their brother, let their victim thereby so conduct himself as that he shall be the saviour of great nations. If a proud prince will wanton in his pride,

so nerve him up, vitally and intellectively, as that his wantonness shall spread great truths through the tribes of the empire. If a warlike king will conquer let the nation exposed to his invasions be one whose chastisement will be a lesson to the world. . . . . If we may suppose that he was endued with a more than mortal foresight; if we may imagine that he had a plan, partly *a priori*, and partly based on foreseen deeds of his subjects, we might then conceive that he could take all the passions, crimes, bold enterprises, and wild movements which he foresaw men would exhibit, into his account, not as by him determined, but as cognized parts within his stupendous scheme of good.

"He would so collocate men and things into a whole plan, that their mutual play would work out the best results. And if his wisdom, as well as his power, is infinite, and his existence is eternal, then the entire scheme could be comprehended within his prescient glance in all its grandest and minutest parts, with all their causations, freedoms, and dependencies, and so comprehended that his predeterminations touch properly his own acts, leaving the free acts to the self-origination of free agents. And this may be, in the great whole, in spite of permitted wrong, the best possible system. We should then, in vision, behold all beings, however free, spontaneously, uncompulsorily, without command or decree, moving in harmony with his outlines of events, which is but the transcript of their free actions, and by their very iniquities and abominations, without any countenance from him or any excuse to themselves, working results they never dreamed, but which are in his plan." [9]

[9] "Will." pp. 294, 296.

(5) Is such a view of God's foreknowledge possible? This is the crucial question of the whole subject. If Dr. Rothe can not sustain his position at this point, his entire argument must be abandoned: he can not accept the prevalent theory because "If God infallibly foreknows with apodictic certainty, all the actions of men, then these actions must be absolutely certain beforehand: but (seeing that, as being partially discretionary, they can not rest absolutely on inner necessity) they could be absolutely certain beforehand only through a divine predetermination; but this would not only preclude the free self-determination of man, but also make God the author of sin. That which in God's knowledge stands objectively fixed, can not be for man, in his present unperfected state, a matter of free determination; the absolute foreknowing on the part of God of the actions of as yet not perfected personal creatures is unavoidably a predetermining of the same." [1]

Analyzing this argument, we find the following points: viz., (*a*) If future actions are foreknown with apodictic certainty, they are absolutely certain. (*b*) But as they are partly discretionary, this absolute certainty can not rest on any inner necessity—such as exists in the morally perfected—and hence this certainty must result from a divine predetermination. (*c*) This in turn necessitates the conclusion that man is not capable of self-determination, and that God is the author of sin.

Consequently, the entire argument depends on the first affirmation that "if future actions are foreknown with apodictic certainty they are absolutely certain." But what are we to understand by the words "ab-

[1] Page 149.

solutely certain" ? Granting that Dr. Rothe's meaning is correct, I think his conclusions will necessarily follow. Since Edwards wrote his celebrated treatise the term "necessity" has been abandoned by most, if not all Calvinists. The "certainty of all future events" has long been the motto of this school of thinkers. But as Arminians have readily granted the pure certainty of all free actions, not a little of the Calvinistic literature is enveloped in a blinding ambiguity. There are different meanings of the word certain. Says Archbishop Whately, "Certain, in its primary sense, is applied (according to its etymology) to the state of a person's mind, denoting any one's full and complete conviction; and generally, though not always, implying that there is sufficient ground for such conviction. It was thence easily transferred metonymically to the truths or events respecting which this conviction is rationally entertained."[2] With the great body of Arminians I readily grant that the foreseen actions of free agents are absolutely certain in the sense that they will occur as God foresees them: but this does not prove that they must so occur, or that they are the result of a divine predetermination. It is, however, with this idea of "absolutely certain" that the argument of Rothe has any relevancy. He grants that some actions may be absolutely foreknown without any divine predetermination. Of the morally perfected, we are told their actions "can be absolutely foreseen by the Infinite Mind." Hence the mere foreknowing of an event does not affect it in the least. On Rothe's supposition some free actions are abso-

[2] "For a full discussion of this term see Whedon's "Will." Also Bledsoe's "Will."

lutely certain, unconditionally certain, and therefore, objectively fixed in the Infinite Mind, without any predetermination. Very well. If some free actions can be foreknown, then so far as the divine knowledge of them is concerned, all may be thus foreknown, without any predetermination. That is, I desire to establish the point that foreknowing is not the same as, nor does it necessitate predetermining. Of course Dr. Rothe denies that the discretionarily free can be foreknown: I do not wish to beg the very question in dispute, but to demonstrate to the reader that Dr. Rothe does not teach the doctrine that foreknowing is identical with predetermining.

Of all the possible volitions of free agents, there will be a particular one put forth by the agent at any particular moment. This would be true if God did not exist: the soul is of a certain temperament: is living in definitely ascertained environments: these serve as the occasional cause—not the efficient cause—for volitional action: the soul may or may not choose, according to the highest dictates of wisdom, but it will certainly choose one out of all possible ways. Now why can not the Infinite Mind see that which will actually be? Because, says Dr. Rothe, if the volition is infallibly foreknown, it must be absolutely certain: and if absolutely certain in the discretionarily free, it is because of the divine predetermination. Why? Because a thing can not be foreknown unless predetermined? No, by no means, for as we have seen Dr. Rothe acknowledges that some free actions are foreknown. The reason is simply this: that if the actions of all men are absolutely foreknown, they are absolutely certain; and hence, according to Dr. Rothe, the

certainty is the result of a divine predetermination. This, however, by no means follows : for a thing may be absolutely certain and yet be entirely free, *i. e.*, the foreseen actions of the morally perfected. True, Dr. Rothe affirms that these occur by an "inner necessity," a universal law of right by which God can foresee their actions. But I ask what is meant by this "inner necessity"? Is it such a necessity that deprives the morally perfected from doing otherwise? I can not believe that Dr. Rothe ever thus regarded it. In that case they would cease to be free, and hence, responsible agents. This absolute certainty, then, which is predicated of the actions of the morally perfected, is a will be, and not a must be. This is all the absolute certainty there is concerning the foreseen actions of all men. They are absolutely certain in the sense that they will infallibly occur as they have been foreseen, not because they must come in that way, nor because of any predetermination ; but because the Infinite Mind unerringly sees things as they are. Hence, I am led to think Dr. Rothe much mistaken in affirming that the declaration God sees free actions as free is a makeshift. Surely it is not so intended by those who employ it : to them it simply expresses what they regard as eternal truth. We might imagine a student of theology examining the evidence of God's existence. He may be told by some that God's eternal existence can not be proved, because it is a matter of intuition : that the attempt to prove it, is just so far a work of supererogation, involving a fundamental inconsistency. In his ignorance of the peculiar constitution of his friend's mind, in his zeal for proving all things, that he may hold fast to that which is good,

he might say, This is a makeshift. So far from solving any difficulty, the matter is made worse because I am told the subject is beyond logical demonstration. But this is unjust to the intuitional idea of God. As used by its advocates it is infinitely removed from any subterfuge or makeshift. In like manner, when the Arminian says that the Infinite Mind sees the future free actions of men as free, he simply affirms that which to him must be true.

To say that it can not be true because we can not see how God can thus foreknow, is to substitute ignorance for argument. Dr. Rothe attempts to demonstrate that it can not be, but it is by confounding a will be with a must be.

(6) Dr. Rothe is unequivocally condemned by Scripture. The following passages should be carefully considered. "And I am sure that the King of Egypt will not let you go, no not by a mighty hand" (Exodus iii. 19). "And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the Lord hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him" (Deut. xviii. 21, 22). "Now, therefore, write ye this song for you, and teach it to the children of Israel; put it in their mouths, that this song may be a witness for me against the children of Israel. For when I shall have brought them into the land which I sware unto their fathers, that floweth with milk and honey; and they shall have eaten and filled themselves, and waxen fat; then will they turn unto other gods and serve them, and provoke me and

break my covenant. And it shall come to pass, when many evils and troubles are befallen them, that this song shall testify against them as a witness, for it shall not be forgotten out of the mouths of their seed ; for I know their imagination which they go about, even now, before I have brought them into the land which I sware" (Deut. xxxi. 19–21). "Thus saith the Lord God, It shall come to pass, that at the same time shall things come unto thy mind, and thou shalt think an evil thought" (Ezek. xxxviii. 10). "I have declared the former things from the beginning ; and they went forth out of my mouth, and I shewed them. I did them suddenly ; and they came to pass. Because I knew that thou art obstinate, and thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy brow brass ; I have even from the beginning declared it unto thee ; before it came to pass I shewed it thee ; lest thou shouldest say mine idol hath done them ; and my graven image, and my molten image hath commanded them" (Isa. xlviii. 3–5). "Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare ; before they spring forth I tell you of them" (Isa. xlii. 9). "Remember the former things of old : for I am God, and there is none else ; I am God, and there is none like me. Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure" (Isa. xlvi. 9, 10). "And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the King of Babylon, and that nation, saith the Lord, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations" (Jer. xxv. 12). "In the first year of Darius, the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the

Medes, which was made King over the realm of the Chaldeans; in the first year of his reign, I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem" (Dan. ix. 1, 2). "And, behold, there came a man of God out of Judah by the word of the Lord unto Bethel; and Jeroboam stood by the altar to burn incense. And he cried against the altar in the word of the Lord, and said, O altar, thus saith the Lord; Behold a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name; and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall be burnt upon thee" (1. Kings xiii. 1, 2). This should be read in connection with the following, which occurred over three hundred years after its prediction. "And as Josiah turned himself, he spied the sepulchres that were there in the mount, and sent, and took the bones out of the sepulchres, and burned them upon the altar, and polluted it, according to the word of the Lord, which the man of God proclaimed, who proclaimed these words" (11. Kings, xxiii. 16). Many more passages might be adduced. The Bible is permeated with the spirit of prophecy.

Generously allowing full scope for the thought of Professor Lacroix that in all the prophecies of the Bible there is some degree of indefiniteness; and fairly granting this may plausibly account for some prophecies, yet it is impossible to bring all of the many prophetic utterances of the Scriptures within the range of this theory. For, as Dr. Keith has well declared,

"Many of the prophecies are as explicit and direct as it is possible that they could have been."

After elucidating Dr. Rothe's view of prophecy, Professor Lacroix says, "But another hypothesis will be more satisfactory to many. It is this. God not only surveys through the pregnant actualities of the present, the general scope of the future, but he also, as occasion requires, makes use of individuals—kings, military chieftains, etc.,—as passive (and in so far, not morally acting) instruments of his purposes. Compare the cases of Pharaoh, Balaam, Jonah, etc. That is, he providentially brings so many and such strong motives to bear upon them, that their actions fall, so to speak, for the time being, under the law of cause and effect; so that he can thus at any time, in the fulfilling of a specific purpose, bring about a specific event, or precipitate a general crisis. Thus the possibility of definite prophecies is fully given, and the field yet left entirely free for the doctrine of the non-foreknowledge of the future volitions of imperfect free creatures." [4]

This is the doctrine of Dr. McCabe as promulgated in his first work, "The Foreknowledge of God." I gladly testify to Dr. McCabe's ability and reverent spirit. If his position is not generally accepted, it will be the fault of the theory and not of its defender. He divides the kingdoms of God into Nature, Providence, Grace and Glory. The last-named kingdom refers to the life of the redeemed in heaven, and is therefore ruled out of the present discussion. Moral freedom and responsibility are conceived as belonging only to the kingdom of grace. "The principle, therefore,

[4] "Bib. Sacra." 1875, p. 160.

that controls in the kingdom of grace is radically different from that which obtains in the kingdoms of nature, providence and glory. . . . When we ascend to the high realms of free grace and human freedom, and accountability for eternal destinies, a new factor is forced upon us, and will not disappear from our vision, however incoherent our reasonings and blinding our prejudices." In prophecy God "overrides the law of liberty, just as he overrides the law of material forces in miracles." "All he would need to do, even in an extreme case, would be to bring controlling influences to bear upon his (man's) sensibilities, to put his will under the law of cause and effect, to make his choices certain, in order to foreknow with entire accuracy the whole process and final result."[5] As there are no prophecies concerning the betrayal of the Saviour by Judas, as the Lord Jesus did not know that this disciple "would certainly develop into the character and reach the ignominious end that he finally did," the betrayer was morally responsible and guilty. "But while we maintain that it is impossible for Omniscience to foresee with definite and absolute certainty the choices of free agents when they act under the law of liberty, we nevertheless believe that God can in multitudes of cases, perhaps in most, judge very accurately as to what is most likely to take place, in given contemplated circumstances."[6]

Dr. McCabe's fundamental positions are now before the reader. Let us notice some of their necessary conclusions. (1) Like Dr. Rothe's theory, Dr. McCabe's postulate involves self-contradictions. In

[5] Pages 61, 62, 30, 42, 43.
[6] Pages 100, 153.

Chaps. XXIV.—XXVIII. the supposed inconsistencies of God's absolute foreknowledge of future free actions are forcibly stated. The "hypothesis that foresees all the actions of free agents makes his affirmations, dealings, promises and threatenings appear most inconsistent." "No consideration whatever could justify infinite goodness in creating a soul that God foreknew would be wretched and suffer forever." "Foreknowledge would prevent proper states of feeling in the Infinite Mind." It makes, "Love, hate, approval, disapproval admiration, contempt, and every variety of feeling, corresponding to every successive variety of my character from birth to death, exist in him at the same instant." There are many more objections against the absolute prescience of God, but I have quoted enough to show their general character. A little reflection will demonstrate their serious conflict with Dr. McCabe's admission that "God can in multitudes of cases, perhaps in most, judge very accurately as to what is most likely to take place in given contemplated circumstances." Far be it from me to raise a false issue. I do not wish to misinterpret Dr. McCabe nor to press his words beyond their legitimate meaning. My criticism is this. If the above objections are valid against absolute foreknowledge, they must also be legitimate against any foreknowledge. The issue is not of mode, but of the fact that God does or does not perfectly or partially know future free actions. If God can judge "very accurately" in most cases, he can not be wholly ignorant of what his creatures will freely do, and therefore, he must have some knowledge of their final destiny. So far as this is true, Dr. McCabe does not escape his own objections. (2)

This is equally true of his postulate that freedom and responsibility belong only to the kingdom of grace. He earnestly contends against fatalism. Affirms "that the dread system of necessity is based upon the assumption of universal prescience." Chapter x. is devoted to the elucidation of this proposition: he declares "No one can have a distinct and complete idea of freedom who embraces fatalism."

But notwithstanding these bold assertions, Dr. McCabe's entire work is based on this "necessity." His idea of prophecy presupposes that the human will is "brought under the law of cause and effect"; hence, God can use man "as an instrument in his hands. He can make use of him as easily as he can make use of fire, water, light, air, sun, moon, or stars. Hence, if God desired a certain providential work to be accomplished five hundred years hence, he could predict it with absolute certainty. All that would be necessary would be to influence the will of some one then living with the requisite intensity to secure a consenting volition, or, as in many cases, an unconscious instrument. The volitions of such an agent would be necessary and foreseen, because forefixed." [7] As the spirit of prophecy permeates the Old Testament, as it forms an important element in the Gospels and Epistles it must be confessed that according to this theory fatalism reigns supreme over no inconsiderable portion of human activities. Dr. McCabe seeks to prove human freedom. How is it accomplished? By affirming that in countless instances man is not free, that his will is brought under the law of cause and effect. If this is a satisfactory solution of the

[7] Pages 39, 40.

problem, I certainly admire the ease with which it is demonstrated. But (3) Dr. McCabe's position logically necessitates the conclusion that God is the author of sin. Beyond all controversy some one must be responsible for the official acts of Pharaoh, Cyrus and other prominent characters of history. If the actors are not responsible because of the strong motives brought before and upon them, then we must look to Him who is said to be the author of these influences. In this case we shall have the perplexing problem solved with the following results: Some men are only partially free: so far forth as their actions follow the law of cause and effect, God is the author. It avails nothing to say that God secures the results through satanic or human agencies. Not only is the original impulse from God, but Dr. McCabe affirms that the act or event is according to the divine purpose. This is clearly illustrated by the history of Pharaoh. Dr. McCabe says God "could say to Moses, 'I am sure the King of Egypt will not let you go.' For as Pharaoh had sinned away his day of grace, God could easily cause his will to come under the law of cause and effect, by permitting Satan and evil spirits to come in upon him 'like a flood,' as a prophet expresses it." Dr. McCabe seems to forget the real issue in this ancient controversy. It is not whether Pharaoh had or had not sinned away his day of grace. It is whether the king will or will not let the people go. The different plagues were brought upon the stubborn king because he would not obey the voice of the great I Am. But if Dr. McCabe is right, we must conclude that God did not wish Pharaoh to obey—did not really mean what he said—and then punished the king for

carrying out the divine intention. (4) Dr. McCabe's hypothesis concerning Peter's denial, is untenable. Speaking of the Saviour's knowledge of Peter and of the denial, he says, "He saw it necessary to allow the will of Peter to be so tempted by demoniacal spirits that he could not withstand their assaults. With the best and most benign ends in view, he suffered him then to be 'tempted above that he was able to bear.' Christ could foreknow and foretell the act of denial, because he knew that Peter's will would be so overborne by temptational influences that it would move as it was moved upon, and thus act, though consentingly, under unconscious constraint." Then we are to understand that Peter could not help denying his Lord. Certainly, for has not Dr. McCabe distinctly affirmed that the disciple could not withstand the temptation of the evil spirits? But wishing to put this issue beyond all chance of misunderstanding, I quote the following: "For, if one is not to blame for not rising up when a mountain is upon him, neither can he be called to account for not achieving a moral character when temptational influences out of all due proportion to his resources of volitional energy were allowed to overpower him." "The moment divine or diabolical influences are brought to bear on an individual will, which are out of exact proportion to its strength of resistance, the will loses its freedom and comes under the power of the same law that rules material forces." "Under the influence of extraneous power the human will may and does act; but the act, not being that of a free agent, can not be held culpable, since, as we have before remarked, it is only when the will acts under the law of liberty, possessing its

power of contrary choice, that its acts can have a moral character, or that its possessor can act as an accountable being." This is sufficiently strong and explicit. But how does it stand the test of Scripture? "Weighed in the balance and found wanting" must be the verdict the moment we see the Master's sad face turned toward Peter as they sat by the fire in the house of the high priest. "Fundamentally false" must be the answer, as we see Peter leaving the place and know of his bitter weeping. The facts of Peter's restoration are meaningless if they do not signify that his denials and profanity were sinful, and therefore preventable. This is admitted by Dr. McCabe when he seeks to palliate Peter's sin. "But that act of denial, though objectively so heinous, was subjectively no more sinful than the sinful tempers, purposes, and affinities which Jesus then saw struggling for victory in the regenerated, but yet unsanctified, soul of Peter. Once more does Dr. McCabe miss the real issue. I do not propose, nor is it our province, to tell the exact degree of Peter's sin. Enough for me to know that it was very sinful, contrary to the desire of the Master, and should have been prevented. Many of the texts adduced by Dr. McCabe as illustrating Peter's sinless fall—1. Kings xxii. 20–22; Judges ix. 23; 1. Sam. xvi. 14—are easily explained without resorting to this more than questionable method. [8]

(5.) Dr. McCabe's doctrine of human liberty is fallacious and pernicious. His concessions to necessitarians are unfortunate. If they were generally adopted the best interests of society would be seriously

[8] See Part II., Ch. IV., Sec. 6

imperiled. The vast majority of men think, feel, and act as if they were free agents and therefore responsible: but according to the theory now under consideration there are innumerable instances where their liberty is suppressed and they become irresponsible. Like Peter, they have no idea of the divine intention: they commit that which they think is sinful, feel guilty for it and often repent with bitter tears; but it is a psychological delusion; as Lord Kames has said, "Though man in truth is a necessary, agent, yet this being concealed from him, he acts with the conviction of being a free agent." Bailey has tersely put it as follows:

> "Free will is but necessity in play,
> The clattering of the golden reins which guide
> The thunder-footed coursers of the sun;
> And thus with man,
> To God he is but working out his will."

The fact is that man's moral nature fundamentally condemns Dr. McCabe's hypothesis. If our moral convictions demand a belief in human freedom, we are free, or else God has made us to believe a lie.

Moreover, if God thus uses his creatures for the performance of that which seems but is not sinful, by what methods shall human justice be secured? So far as possible human laws should reflect the divine will: If a wretch like President Garfield's assassin is overpowered by temptational influences, thereby becoming a necessary agent in the hands of his Creator, upon what grounds shall he be tried and executed? By what means are we to know that he was not a necessitated agent? In future crimes how shall we discriminate between the heavenly and earthly constituted perpetrators?

Dr. McCabe's theory that God tempts—through satanic influences—is antagonistic to the teaching of Jas. i. 13. He also misinterprets 1. Cor. x. 13, which declares the universal procedure of the Father of mercies that no one will be tempted above that which he is able to bear. As Dr. L. P. Hickok has truly said, "Not only has the man the native powers of free agency whereby the spirit may control the sense and hold every appetite and passion in subjection to reason, however strongly these may be influenced by temptation, but, beyond this, special spiritual help is graciously offered to every tempted soul." [9]

Dr. McCabe's arguments to show that Judas was not the subject of prophecy are quite plausible. I question his interpretation of John vi. 64, and Acts i. 16. Zechariah xi. 12,13 must have some meaning It is universally conceded that this prophet uttered many predictions of Christ and his kingdom. Until a better interpretation can be obtained the vast majority of biblical scholars will refer this passage to Judas. But for the sake of the argument I am willing to grant all that Dr. McCabe claims for the betrayer. It is also freely admitted that the doctrine of divine foreknowledge is not without its difficulties. But Dr. McCabe greatly exaggerates their number and cogency. The proposition that a "Belief in divine foreknowledge depresses the energies of the soul," is contradicted by the remarkable growth of that body of Christians of which Dr. McCabe is an honored member. That it depresses the energies of some natures is because they insist that foreknowledge is equivalent to

[9] "Bib. Sacra." 1873, p. 666. "Temptation No Excuse for Transgression."

foreordination. But the vast majority of Arminians are of a different opinion, whose faith is demonstrated by their abundant works.

In concluding Chapter XIV.—"Foreknowledge Incomprehensible"—Dr. McCabe says, "Until the advocates of universal prescience can present something besides dogmatic assertion in its support, the writer must remain standing respectfully before them in the attitude of a perplexed but devout questioner." Very well. But why so much argument to silence mere dogmatism? The truth is, when Dr. McCabe shall have formulated a doctrine of nescience self-consistent and agreeing with the fundamental postulates of religion his opponents will consider the advisability of a capitulation.

In this connection it is proper to notice the able article on "Recent Theories of the Divine Foreknowledge," by Rev. W. H. Cobb, "Bib. Sacra," Oct., 1883. The views of Rothe, McCabe, Dorner, and Whedon are analyzed and classified. His main position will be considered in subsequent pages. In concluding this section I will briefly note our agreements and differences. (1) We agree in the doctrine of divine foresight as taught by the Scriptures. Dr. Cobb says, "But the Bible also opposes any hesitancy as to the divine foresight, of freedom by teaching, the full omniscience and prescience of God." (2) We agree in rejecting all those theories which deny the foreknowledge of God. He says, "The result of our Scriptural examination is to negative decidedly the theories of Rothe, Dorner and McCabe." (3) We differ as to the relation of God's foreknowledge to his will. I reject, while Dr. Cobb accepts, with one modification, the

"traditional" or Calvinistic doctrine that foreknowledge is subsequent to the decree. His special arguments for this position will be examined as we advance.

## SECTION II.

### *Calvinism Limits God's Omniscience.*

The previous section has disclosed two interesting facts concerning the omniscience of God and human freedom. The great majority of Arminians agree with the Calvinists in earnestly advocating the divine foreknowledge. On the other hand all Arminians agree with Dr. Rothe that human freedom—self-determination — can not be held if human actions are predetermined by the divine Will. Thus the reader will perceive that the Arminian holds a middle position in the great contest for a right conception of the Divine Government. If he believes in the freedom of the will, he also believes in, and heartily accepts Paul's affirmation that "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (II. Tim. iii. 16). When he finds some revealed truths which are hard to be understood, he has no desire to invent a theory which shall unequivocally conflict with the plain teachings of the Word. He does not wish a God who can be comprehended. If he interprets the Bible so as not to make it self-contradictory, nor teach doctrines which are fundamentally condemned by the inner revelation written on the fleshly table of the heart, he is willing to see some things "through a glass, darkly," believing that in

the glorious future he shall know even as also he is known.

The Calvinist has always earnestly contended for the Divine Omnipotence. When the Arminian, accepting the plain teachings of Scripture, declares that the omnipotence of God is limited by free will, the Calvinist is ever ready to exclaim, This is Pelagian. It is, therefore, quite refreshing to see this same Calvinist place a limitation on the omniscience of God. Which is the more important, power or knowledge?

The reader will please remember that in the previous chapter we were distinctly told that God could not know the future actions of men unless he previously determined to accomplish or permit them, that according to Calvin, God knew Adam's fall, "because he had ordained it so by his own decree." Dr. Emmons declares that the foreknowledge of God must be founded upon his decree, for if it is not, "it has no foundation: it is an effect without a cause."

Is this logically true? I think not, and for the following reasons: (1) It contradicts all human conceptions. Humanly speaking, existence must precede action. This is universally true. We can not imagine a creature or thing as acting, without presupposing the existence of that creature or thing. It is equally true on the supposition that action begins the very instant of existence: for the existence is, and must be the foundation for the action. So far forth this must be true of God. The mind can not conceive any attribute of God without presupposing the conception of existence. If I affirm the divine Power or Love, I first assume the existence of him who displays such wondrous strength and affection. This

equally applies to the subject under consideration. The foreknowledge of God is his knowledge of things which will take place in time. Knowledge is of the intellect, while determination is of the will. Hence, as all action necessarily presupposes existence, so volition presupposes knowledge; otherwise the determination is the result of ignorance. To say this is true of man but not of God, is mere assumption. Inasmuch as we are the offspring of God, the probabilities are decidedly in favor of this position. To affirm that God's thoughts and determinations are eternal, and therefore the Arminian's position can not be maintained, is of no effect. Granting this to be true, yet the eternity of God's thoughts and volitions does not preclude the fundamental conception and necessary assumption of his existence, and hence the same law of logical necessity will compel us to conceive of his knowledge prior to, and as the basis of his determination. Moreover, if this last claim of the Calvinist be true, if God's thoughts and volitions are from eternity, why should he so dogmatically assert the priority of the Divine Volition?

(2) The Calvinistic doctrine of God's foreknowledge is no foreknowledge. It is simply foreordination. If God can not foreknow the future free actions of men, then so far forth there is no such thing as divine foreknowledge. The Calvinist confounds all true distinctions. Knowledge is one thing: volition quite another: hence if God is under the necessity of predetermining things in order to know them, then the legitimate product is foreordination, instead of foreknowledge. This will be clearly indicated by a moment's reflection. Suppose the reader should try to increase his knowl-

edge by an act of volition. Let him seek to know something of astronomy, geology or chemistry by mere determinations. Let him endeavor to acquire knowledge of human activities by sitting in his study day after day, doing nothing but exercising his will-power. Is it not apparent at a glance that the only knowledge possible in such circumstances is that concerning self? He knows what he has determined, relative to self and others, but beyond this, absolutely nothing.

Certainly not; because knowledge does not and can not come in such ways. So far from being the product of volition, knowledge forms the proper means for a discriminate and effective volition: Knowledge is the clear perception of things, not the determination of them. As this is all the foreknowledge allowed God by the Calvinist, it follows that the term is a misnomer. It is divine foreordination; as Dr. Breckinridge says, All things that will be actual he knows as being determined by his will."

Let us now consider the arguments of Dr. Cobb against the Arminian conception of God's prescience. The following points are to be noted: (1) Dr. Cobb acknowledges that from any conception of divine foreknowledge the "mystery" is not eliminated. "The *modus* of the connection between the divine foreknowledge and the world is, from any point of view, a mystery. The five theories we have examined may be regarded as differing simply in the location of the mystery;" hence (2) As I have said, the question is not What view is free from difficulties? but What theory is most free from contradictions and mysteries? Consequently after elucidating the Calvinistic doctrine, Dr. Cobb says, "It is my conviction that every one of

these mysteries, except the last, results, when carried to its logical issues, in inconceivableness and contradiction. That this is not true of the last is witnessed, I hold, by the analogy of our every-day experience. All the vast and complicated business of life is carried on in implicit reliance on the law that free choices are practically certain beforehand; and that men who *may* go in any one of various ways will *choose* to go in a particular way. The uncertainties of this approximation result from imperfect data, not from an unsound principle." The last paragraph will be noticed in due time. Suffice for the present that we clearly see Dr. Cobb's reason for rejecting the Arminian doctrine of prescience. Not on account of its mystery, but because of its "inconceivableness and contradiction." (3) Dr. Cobb makes some important admissions. "It would be hazardous for any one to assert that Whedon's theory of the divine foreknowledge is, on the face of it, contrary to Holy Scripture. Indeed, random assertions of this nature have been quite too current on the part of both Calvinists and Arminians; it ought to be acknowledged frankly that a long line of patient expositors in each of these great bodies has developed, in either case, a system of Biblical theology which has a fair measure of consistency and comprehensiveness." "We go as far as any Arminian in maintaining the power of alternate choice." Quoting the words of Charnock, "Man hath a power to do otherwise than that which God foreknows he will do." Dr. Cobb says, "Thus far, then, we hold, distinctly and heartily, with the Arminians." Speaking of the usual Calvinistic doctrine, he says, ". . . . there is one outwork of the fortress which I think must be abandoned. . .

I refer to the identification of both knowledge and will with the simple essence of God ;" he thinks a very different impression is made by the Scriptures which represent knowledge and will as distinct, so "that while God knows all things, he does not will what he hates." Once more. "We conclude that the traditional view of the divine foreknowledge stands in need of no modification save the holding fast the distinction in God between knowledge and will ; the former being fixed from eternity · the latter being gradually accomplished in time."

If I mistake not, these quotations—with their logical implications—will suffice to show the "inconceivableness and contradiction" of Dr. Cobb's position ; for (*a*) Granting the essential difference between the divine knowledge and will, and asserting that God does not will that which he hates, the conclusion will surely follow that God foreknows many things prior to volition ; *e. g.*, all things which he hates. But as most of the free actions of men are evil—which the infinitely pure God hates with a perfect hatred—the vast majority of future free actions are known independently of the divine will. To me, this seems to be correct reasoning—the legitimate conclusion from the premises. But Dr. Cobb thinks differently. If I have correctly interpreted his language, he will reply, God has a knowledge of future free actions, but not foreknowledge. "The latter respects a future certainty, which can be made certain only by God's decree." Then knowledge differs from foreknowledge as certainty differs from uncertainty. Take the other horn of the dilemma. Dr. Cobb will not deny the certainty of the future free actions of the wicked : hence,

they have been the subject of divine decree. But Dr. Cobb declares God does not will what he hates. The truth is, Dr. Cobb has deceived himself concerning the nature of foreknowledge and certainty. If God knows that which he hates without willing it, he knows the future free acts of the wicked; that is foreknowledge. I care not at this juncture whether these acts are, or are not certain. I do not propose to be entangled in a web of fallacies composed of different meanings of the term certain.

The affirmation that there is an essential difference between God's knowledge and his foreknowledge can not be maintained. True, as Dr. Cobb declares, "We can conceive him as a perfect God without foreknowledge," simply because both terms refer to one attribute. Had there been no creation there would have been no foreknowledge of free actions, simply because there would have been no free agents. Yet there was the attribute of omniscience with its infinite capacities. Should Dr. Cobb say I have yielded the contest in his favor, I would courteously reply, Nay; let me ask a question. Why did God create the present moral system instead of some other? Because it was the best possible system. Omniscience saw the best of all possibilities. Will determined the actuality. If I am not mistaken this is conceded by Dr. Cobb. Speaking of the possibilities of creation he says, "Granting that there is no chronological separation between the knowledge of possibilities and of realities, we still insist, with Whedon himself, that volition must logically come after perception." (*b*) Dr. Cobb is involved in serious contradictions. Of Charnock's views of foreknowledge he says, "Dr. Whedon will

accord (as do we) with Charnock's account of the nature of foreknowledge." This eminent Puritan divine says, "God's foreknowledge is not, simply considered, the cause of anything. It puts nothing into things, but only beholds them as present, and arising from their proper causes. . . . . God foreknows things because they will come to pass; but things are not future because God knows them." But now for a radical change; he continues, "No reason can be given why God knows a thing to be, but because he infallibly wills it to be." Plainly, here is a serious contradiction. Let the reader compare them. In the first quotation it is declared foreknowledge "puts nothing into things"; it "only beholds them as present," coming "from their proper causes." God foreknows them "because they will come to pass"; but presto, change; now God can foreknow only as "he infallibly wills it to be." Evidently this glaring contradiction was perceived by Dr. Cobb. He tries to break its force by saying, "If any one chooses to say Charnock was an Arminian on the will, but a Calvinist on the decrees, we will not dispute about names." But this will not do. May I remind Dr. Cobb that the dispute is not about names, nor whether Charnock was or was not an Arminian on the will. It is a dispute concerning consistency, for the quotations refer to the nature of divine foreknowledge. True, among the citations are affirmations of human freedom; but the majority of them refer to foreknowledge, as is conceded by Dr. Cobb when he says, "Dr. Whedon will accord (as do we) with Charnock's account of the nature of foreknowledge." Hence, the contradiction remains. In the full exercise of his liberty Dr. Cobb may choose

his position ; but as an Arminian, I object to such an interpretation of the power of alternate choice as will allow him to accept two contradictory postulates.

Once more : his remark that "New England Calvinists have ever had a distinct and clear-cut conviction that God foreknows with infallible certainty all things from all eternity" is ambiguous, and unintentionally misleading. The remark is true, because "New England Calvinists have ever had a distinct and clear-cut conviction" that God decreed all things. By referring to Chapter II. of Part I. the reader will see the correctness of this proposition. Dwight, Emmons, Hopkins, Griffin, D. T. Fiske and Lawrence agree in teaching that God foreknows only as he decrees ; hence the certainty is a divine determination. What kind of a certainty is Dr. Cobb discussing? Repeatedly does he use the term (see pp. 682, 685–687, 693, 694). Is it a certainty which is a will be or a must be? Evidently the former, for he says, "We hold that as a matter of fact men always do (not must) choose this rather than that because they are persuaded so to do, and that since all these objects of persuasion in all their connections were infallibly foreknown by God, he infallibly foreknew the decisions of the will. We hold that God has created a system of free beings able in every case to choose otherwise than as they do,—finite and fallible, it is true, and so often choosing wrong—but yet with sense enough to choose in every case as the thing looks to them ; and that their Maker can always tell how it will look to them. We go as far as any Arminian in maintaining the power of alternate choice." Very well. This is good enough Arminianism for me, and I should judge,

for Dr. Whedon. One quotation will suffice. "If any power be planted in an agent, God who placed it there, must know it. And if that power be, as we shall assume to have proved, a power to do otherwise than the agent really does do, God may be conceived to know it, and to know it in every specific instance." [1] In the light of this agreement let us consider the analogical argument by which Dr. Cobb seeks to show the validity of the "traditional view." "All the vast and complicated business of life is carried on in implicit reliance on the law that free choices are practically certain beforehand; and that men who *may* go in any one of various ways will *choose* to go in a particular way. The uncertainties of this approximation result from imperfect data, not from an unsound principle; hence what is so high a degree of certainty to the finite apprehension becomes absolute certainty to the infinite apprehension." Unquestionably this is true; no one can successfully deny that man is a rational creature; that while he is free, yet there are limitations, rules and regulations by which he is governed. 'Power of contrary choice" does not mean irrationality nor lawlessness. The principle elucidated by Dr. Cobb, is not only recognized, but cheerfully accepted by Arminians. [2] So far the issue has not been reached. The question is this. How does God foreknow with infallible certainty? Is it because he has so decreed? If so, how can free beings "choose otherwise than as they do"? How can they choose wrong—as Dr.

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1 "The Freedom of the Will," pp. 271, 272.

2 See Whedon's "Will." Chap. V. "Uniformities of Volition" Cocker's "The Theistic Conception of the World." Chap. XI. "Moral. Government."

Cobb affirms they often do—since their choice is as the decree? Hence it would seem that all the certainty for which Dr. Cobb is contending is a will be, perfectly removed from the must be. On the other hand, he uses language which seem to demand the opposite conclusion. This will appear as we consider (*c*) The inconceivableness of the Arminian's position. Dr. Cobb says that all theories antagonistic to Calvinism, deny "God's *independent* knowledge of the free acts of his creatures. We mean by this knowledge, that which he draws from himself alone. . . . . Dorner and Whedon hold that if God foreknows free acts, he draws the knowledge from the agents, not from himself." This objection is pressed with considerable force, as when Dr. Cobb says, "When we inquire 'How can God draw his knowledge from an object not yet in existence, a zero?' we are not asking after a method, but suggesting a contradiction. . . . . Before the creation of the world, God infallibly knew the volition I am this moment exercising. Is it not absurd to say that he had *then* derived this certain knowledge from my act, which (in Whedon's view) had nothing whatever to make it certain till this moment?" In what sense does Arminianism deny "God's independent knowledge of the free acts of his creatures"? Manifestly in that the free acts are indissolubly connected with a divine predetermination. Certainly as the creation of man was an independent act of God, so far forth is his knowledge of free acts drawn from himself. This is the fundamental position of Dr. Whedon, who says, "We may first remark that our view of free agency does not so much require in God a foreknowledge of a

*peculiar kind of event* as a knowledge in him of a *peculiar quality existent in the free agent.* . . . . If any power be planted in an agent, God, who placed it there, must know it." [3]

Answering an objection that if the free act may occur in any one of many ways, the divine prescience must be uncertain, Dr. Richard Watson says, " . . . . not unless any person can prove, that the divine prescience is unable to dart through all the workings of the human mind, all its comparisons of things in the judgment, all the influences of motives on the affections, all the hesitancies and haltings of the will to its final choice. 'Such knowledge is too wonderful for us,' but it is the knowledge of him, who understandeth the thoughts of man afar off.' " [4]

Replying to Edwards, Bledsoe says, " Hence, if Edwards merely means that God could not foreknow a human volition, unless he foreknew all the circumstances in view of the mind when it is to act, as well as the nature and all the circumstances of the mind from which the act is to proceed ; no advocate of free agency is at all concerned to deny his position. It may be true, or it may be false ; but it establishes nothing which may not be consistently admitted by the advocates of free agency." [5]

These extracts from representative Arminians sufficiently indicate the position for which I am contending : hence, when Dr. Cobb objects to what he calls the " device of the eternal now," I am prepared for

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[3] " Will," p. 271. See also, p. 284.

[4] " Theological Institutes," Vol. I., p. 381. Watson quotes Dr. S. Clark and Copleston to the same effect.

[5] " Will," p. 146. Dr. McCabe is of a different opinion ; but in his conception of the will he is hardly a representative Arminian.

his "fatal objection," viz., "that God's foreknowledge of a free choice exists at successive points of human history previous to the formation of the choice. So Scripture seems to represent it." Certainly; otherwise where is God's foreknowledge? Once more. Speaking of Peter's vehement protestation, and his subsequent denial, Dr. Cobb asks, "Did our Lord know the contrary by any reflection from the subsequent denial? The choice to deny had no existence, and never had had. Nor was it conjectured as probable, but revealed as absolutely certain. . . . . If one were able, by the argument *ab ignorantia*, to carry Peter's free act of the next morning into a timeless eternity, still he could not bring it back again into an anterior time. The mind recalcitrates against such a process." This is followed by his view of foreknowledge. "How much simpler and more rational to say that Christ knew Peter himself, with an absolute knowledge of all his impulses; knew the holy motives which he would freely resist, and the temptation to which he would freely yield; aye, had known this before the disciple was born." Verily, I find no fault with this. Interpreted by my previous modifications and quotations, it is the identical foreknowledge of this work. As Bushnell has truly said, God "foreknows everything first conditionally, in the world of possibility, before he creates, or determines anything to be, in the world of fact. Otherwise, all his purposes would be grounded in ignorance, not in wisdom, and his knowledge would consist in the following after his will, to learn what his will has blindly determined." [6]

I will now return to the main thought of this sec-

[6] "Nature and the Supernatural," p. 50.

tion, considering (3) The Calvinistic idea of permission. Dr. E. A. Lawrence declares "God could not foreknow an event which was dependent on his positive or permissive will until he had purposed to accomplish or permit it." As all events are included within the positive or permissive decrees, this assertion must be of universal application. If the Calvinist's distinction between the positive and permissive decrees is valid, then there are some things which God has merely decreed to allow or permit; the Divine Determination concerns not the thing itself—as in the case of the things positively decreed—but simply the occurrence of the thing. God decrees not to stop it. Very well. If this be so, if God has simply decreed to permit some things to occur, then he must have known prior to that decree that the permitted things were to be: for how is it possible to permit a nonentity? But if God knew the existence of some human things without first decreeing them, then it irresistibly follows that the knowledge of God is not only prior to, but so far forth, is the ground of his decree. But if some of the decrees are based upon the divine knowledge, this Arminian wedge is sufficient to demolish the Calvinistic doctrine of decrees: for says the Calvinist, The decrees are one. The Calvinist may choose either horn of the dilemma. If he holds to the distinction of permissive decrees, he will irresistibly gravitate into Arminianism. If he denies the distinction of permissive decrees—which is pure and consistent Calvinism—he is met by an emphatic Thus saith the Lord: Are not my ways equal, O house of Calvin? Are not your ways unequal?

(4) We now see the utter groundlessness of this

Calvinistic assumption that God can not know future free actions unless he has previously determined them. It has no warrant either in reason or Scripture. Reason demands knowledge as the basis of volition—human or divine. Where is the passage of the Word telling us God can not know until he predetermines? We look in vain throughout the Bible, for it declares no such doctrine. It clearly teaches that God does know the future free actions of men without explaining the *modus operandi*. This, as the reader well knows, the Arminian gladly accepts. If the Calvinistic solution were the only one possible, if the alternative were the acceptance of Calvinism, or the rejection of the plain teaching of Scripture, I could only say, "Let God be true, but every man a liar." It is this firm adherence to the Bible that has compelled me to disagree so emphatically with that class of Arminian thinkers who deny the divine foreknowledge. So far I am with my antagonists, the Calvinists. This may prompt them to say that my confidence in the Bible should lead me to accept their doctrines, even though there are some things hard to be understood. But right here I beg leave to differ. Walking by faith is one thing, shutting my eyes to the light quite another. By the first I honor God: by the latter I cast reproach upon him, who has said, "Come now, let us reason together." Luther once said: God is above mathematics, logic, and reason. Doubtless it was piously meant; but I am sure it was a very foolish remark. If Calvinism tries to vindicate the ways of God to men it must do so according to the laws of reason and the plain teachings of Scripture. Here is the conflict. I, with many others, think its

attempts egregious failures. This is what I am endeavoring to prove ; with what success, the reader must judge.

## SECTION III.

### *The Bible Testimony Concerning the Divine Prescience and Will.*

For centuries eminent scholars have been divided by the question, What does the Bible Teach on this Subject ? It is evident at a glance that if learned and candid exegetes can not entirely agree in answering this question, the ordinary Christian student may be excused from venturing an independent solution.

Hence I shall rest satisfied for the present, by presenting the views of eminent thinkers who are known to belong to the Calvinistic or independent schools of theology. The following testimony is worthy of special consideration. If the peculiar doctrines of Calvinism are not sustained by this examination it will be legitimate to affirm that the system is radically unbiblical

The reader will bear in mind the precise nature of the problem. It relates to the Divine Foresight and Will. The Calvinist affirms and the Arminian denies that the will of God is prior to, and the basis of his foreknowledge.

" Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain " (Acts ii. 23). The fact that foreknowledge is the second term avails nothing since the process is reversed in other passages. Alford says : " The counsel and foreknowledge of God are not the same ; the former designates his

Eternal Plan, by which he has arranged all things (hence the determinate counsel) the latter, the omniscience, by which every part of this plan is foreseen and unforgotten by him."

Meyer has the following: "This was no work of men, no independent success of the treachery, which would, in fact, testify against the Messiahship of Jesus! but it happened in virtue of the fixed, therefore unalterable, resolve and (in virtue of the) foreknowledge of God."

"And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and glorified the word of the Lord; and as many as were ordained to eternal life, believed" (Acts xiii. 48). This passage has long been a favorite proof-text for Calvinists. Thus Dr. Cobb in the article previously considered maintains that if the more natural interpretation of 1. Pet. 1–3, and Rom. viii. 29, favors the Arminian, the more natural interpretation of John vi. 37 and Acts xiii. 48 favors the Calvinist.[7] But this is by no means a warrantable conclusion. It is now generally conceded that the doctrine of unconditional predestination is not taught by the passage. Not a few scholars are of the opinion that the word "ordained" is inaccurate, the original idea being better expressed by "disposed." It is thus translated by Alford, who says, "The Jews had judged themselves unworthy of eternal life; the Gentiles, as many as were disposed to eternal life, believed. By whom so disposed, is not here declared, nor need the word be in this place further particularized. We know that it is God who worketh in us the will to believe, and that the preparation of the heart is of him;

7 "Bib. Sacra," 1883, p. 667.

but to find in this text preordination to life asserted, is to force both the word and the context to a meaning which they do not contain." Meyer says, "It was dogmatic arbitrariness which converted our passage into a proof of the *decretum absolutum*. For Luke leaves out of account the relation of 'being ordained' to free self-determination; the object of his remark is not to teach a doctrine, but to indicate a historical sequence."

Dr. Jenks in the Comprehensive Commentary says, "It would seem we must look elsewhere for the doctrine of absolute election."

Bloomfield affirms, "That it is a popular mode of expression, is proved by Rabbinical citations of Lightfood and Wescott, who give a score of examples of the phrase ordained to future life—to punishment, to life, to hell."

"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren" (Rom. viii. 29).

Dr. Albert Barnes says "The literal meaning of the word can not be a matter of dispute. It denotes properly to know beforehand; to be acquainted with future events. This passage does not affirm why or how or on what grounds God knew that some would be saved. It simply affirms the fact." Godet says, "The decree of predestination is founded on the act of foreknowledge." In the American edition of Godet's Epistle to the Romans, the editor, Dr. T. W. Chambers, combats this interpretation and affirms the usual Calvinistic doctrine. Like the eminent theologians whom we have already considered, Dr. Chambers fails to show

why "a sovereign God does not save the non-elect. Calvinism can not stand erect in the presence of gospel exegesis.

Speaking of the divine call, Alford says, "It sprung from God's foreknowledge, co-ordinate with his foredetermination of certain persons to be conformed to the image of his Son." Again, in alluding to the meaning of foreknew, he says, "This has been much disputed, the Pelagian view,—'those who he foreknew would believe' is taken by Origen, Chrysostom, Augustine, and others; the sense of foreloved, by Grotius, and others; that of foredecreed, by Stuart and others; that of elected, adopted as his sons, by Calvin, who says, 'The foreknowledge of God, of which Paul here makes mention, is not bare prescience, as some ignorant persons foolishly pretend, but adoption, whereby God hath ever distinguished his Sons from the wicked.' That this latter is implied, is certain: but I prefer taking the word in the ordinary sense of foreknew, especially as it is guarded from being a 'bare prescience' by what follows. . . . His foreknowledge was not a mere being previously aware how a series of events would happen; but was co-ordinate with, and inseparable from, his having preordained all things."

If, as Alford declares, the divine foreknowledge and foredetermination are co-ordinate what reason has the Calvinist to assert that the foreknowledge must be subordinate to the predermination? The following is from Dr. David Brown in "The Portable Commentary." "In what sense are we to take the word 'foreknow' here? 'Those who he foreknew would repent and believe,' say Pelagians of every age

and every hue. But this is to thrust into the text what is contrary to the whole spirit, and even letter of the Apostle's teaching (see Ch. ix. 11; II. Timothy i. 9). In Ch. xi. 2, and Psalm i. 6, God's 'knowledge' of his people can not be restricted to a mere foresight of future events, or acquaintance with what is passing here below. Does 'whom he did foreknow,' then, mean whom he foreordained? Scarcely, because both foreknowledge and foreordination are here mentioned, and the one as the cause of the other. It is difficult indeed for our limited minds to distinguish them as states of the Divine Mind towards men; especially since in Acts ii. 23, 'the counsel' is put before 'the foreknowledge of God,' while in I. Peter i. 2 'election' is said to be 'according to the foreknowledge of God.' But probably God's foreknowledge of his own people means his peculiar, gracious, *complacency in them*, while his 'predestinating' or 'foreordaining' them signifies his fixed purpose, flowing from this, to 'save them and call them with an holy calling' (II. Timothy i. 9) to be conformed to the image of his Son." So far as this solution bears upon the generic question, it is inclined toward Arminianism; for Dr. Brown distinctly asserts that the predestination flows from the foreknowledge.

Meyer's view is worthy of particular attention: he says, "προγ never in the New Testament (not even in xi. 2, I. Peter i. 20) means anything else than to know beforehand (Acts xxvi. 5; II. Peter iii. 17; Judith ix. 6; Wisd. vi. 13; viii. 8; xviii. 6). . . . . That in classic usage it ever means anything else, can not be at all proved. . . . . It is God's being aware in his plan, by means of which, before the subjects

are destined by him to salvation, he knows whom he has to destine thereto." [8]

The following from Dr. Moses Stuart is substantially the same as the view of Dr. Barnes. "The text does not say why or how God foreknew; but merely that he did so." Again ". . . . all those of any party in theology who draw from προεγνω the conclusion that God foreordained or chose or loved, out of his mere good pleasure, on the one hand; or from his foresight of faith and good works on the other; deduce from the text what is not in it, for it says neither the one nor the other. . . . It lies on the face of the whole paragraph, that certainty of future glory to all the κλητοί Θεοῦ, is what the writer means to affirm: and to affirm it by showing that it is a part of the everlasting purposes of God." [9]

In commenting on this passage Olshausen informs his readers that "the expressions in these verses, which refer to the doctrine of election by grace . . . . will be further explained at Rom. ix." Considering the different passages where the terms "foresee" "foreknow" "predetermine" "purpose" occur, he says they "express the knowledge and the will of God, before the object of his knowledge comes into outward manifestations. And as all the expressions applied in Scripture to God have been selected, not on his account, but for the sake of man, so too, it is only for man that they hold perfectly good. Considered from the human point of view, God does in fact foreknow, although for himself the whole co-exists in one eternal present. Again, in the expressions in question, there

[8] Com. Vol. II., pp. 93, 95. See Note I at the end of this Chapter.
[9] "Com." pp. 385-387.

are evidently two distinct classes, first those which express knowledge or discernment, then those which apply to the will. It may be objected that, although the will always presupposes the knowledge of that which a man wills, yet knowledge need not always be combined with the volition of the thing known. God, for instance, knows evil as such, not simply as a phenomenon ; he discerns in the evil deed what it is that makes evil, but not the will. Yet, correct as this is, it has no relation to the phraseology of Paul. The apostle never speaks but of God's knowledge of the evil phenomenon ; but this, God wills as well as knows ; and it is only and solely because he wills it that it comes into manifestation. We must, therefore, altogether reject the Pelagian distinction of a *prævisio* and *prædestinatio* when we view the question in relation to the good (since it has indeed with regard to evil a degree of truth) as being of no service at all in solving the difficulties in the apostle's writings. In Paul, God's foreknowledge always implies a foreworking and a foredetermination, just as his foredetermination is never without foreknowledge." [1]

We shall have occasion to reconsider the position of this eminent theologian. Let it suffice for the present that we ascertain his exact standing on the point now at issue, viz., Is the determination of God prior to his knowledge? He grants that it is legitimate to say that a thing may be known without its being willed : that God discerns the generic nature of evil without willing it (although he does will the manifestations or forms of evil) ; while he thinks God's foreknowledge always implies a foreworking, and a

[1] "Com." Vol. IV., p. 82.

foredetermination, he also affirms that this determination is never without foreknowledge, which not only necessitates the conclusion that foreknowledge can not be subordinate to predestination, but fairly implies that prescience is prior to volition

The following from the Commentary of Dr. Charles Hodge is worthy of careful consideration. "It is evident, on the one hand, that προγνωσις expresses something more than the presence of which all men and all events are the subjects; and on the other, something different from the προορισμος (predestination) expressed by the following word 'whom he foreknew, them he also predestinated.' The predestination follows, and is grounded on the foreknowledge. The foreknowledge, therefore, expresses the act of cognition or recognition—the fixing, so to speak, the mind upon, which involves the idea of selection. If we look over a number of objects with the view of selecting some of them for a definite purpose, the first act is to fix the mind on some, to the neglect of the others; and the second is to destine them to the proposed end. So God is represented as looking on the fallen mass of men, and fixing on some whom he predestinates to salvation. This is the προγνωσις, the foreknowledge, of which the apostle here speaks. It is the knowing, fixing upon, or selecting those who are to be predestinated to be conformed to the image of the Son of God."

This concession is of great importance. When Dr. Hodge admits that "the predestination follows and is grounded on the foreknowledge," he has virtually decided the contest against his own system. As I have remarked, this is the *very* question at issue, and

the one which I propose to keep before the reader, viz., Does the determination of God come before his foreknowledge? Dr. Hodge says it does not. On the contrary he affirms that it follows and is grounded on the foreknowledge. His after explanation is valuable only as it illustrates the difficulties by which the Calvinist is surrounded when he attempts to evade the legitimate consequences of the concession. Take his analogy of a finite mind looking "over a number of objects with the view of selecting some of them for a definite purpose," and if it proves anything, it certainly shows that a given object is selected in proportion as it is fitted to fulfill the required end. On the same principle is the Divine selection made.[2]

As the term "foreknew" in Rom. xi. 2 is of the same nature as the passage under consideration, we may legitimately pass to the Petrine conception of this subject. In the First Epistle we are told that election is "according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ" (i. 2). Rev. A. R. Fausset says this passage means "foreordaining love (v. 20) inseparable from God's *fore*knowledge, the origin from which, and pattern according to which election takes place. Acts ii. 23, and Romans xi. 2, prove 'foreknowledge' to be foreordination. God's foreknowledge is not the perception of any ground of action out of himself; still in it liberty is comprehended, and all absolute constraint debarred."[3]

If election is inseparable from God's foreknowledge,

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2 For the views taught in Lange's Commentary, see Note II. at the end of this Chapter.

3 "The Portable Commentary."

and if this foreknowledge is the origin from which and pattern according to which it takes place, then the volition can not precede the prescience.

The following is from Dr. Cowles who, though not a pronounced Calvinist is not generally identified with the Arminians. His reputation is that of an earnest, independent commentator. "In the words 'elect according to the foreknowledge of God, the Father,' the difficulties pertain to theology rather than to interpretation. The sense of the words is very obvious so far as the province of interpretation extends. They imply that election is according to God's foreknowledge. This interprets their proper meaning. It remains for the theologian to inquire whether we can ascertain how God foreknows the free moral activities of men ; how the fact that he does, can be harmonized with man's freedom ; also, whether he must be supposed to elect men according to his own foreknowledge of what they will do without his own working in them morally, or with and under this spiritual inworking, etc. In other words, does his election hinge upon his foreknowing things as they are, or things as they are not? Things as they are, means a world of free and morally responsible agents with whose freedom God never interferes, but always honors and recognizes it: means a system of spiritual agencies from God working toward the salvation of men, which agencies of the Spirit, some men resist to their own ruin. The foreknowledge, therefore, upon which election turns is not foreknowing what men would do if there were no Holy Ghost, or what they would do if his influences were withheld ; but it is rather foreknowing what men will do under the truth as im-

pressed by the Spirit. Hence, we can readily appreciate the supreme, unparalleled wisdom of the exhortation: 'work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who worketh in you to will and do of his own pleasure' (Phil. ii. 12, 13)."[4]

It will now be in order to pause and see what our investigation has revealed. And once more I respectfully request the reader to remember the precise point at issue. I have repeatedly said that the Arminian does not endeavor to tell *how* God can foreknow the future actions of free agents: he simply affirms the fact, and on the basis of that fact he declares that the Divine Will must be conditioned on that knowledge. This is emphatically denied by the Calvinist. As I have clearly shown in Chapter III. of Part I., almost every Calvinistic theologian from Augustine to Hodge has declared the priority of the Divine Will, affirming that God could know the future free actions only as he had previously determined to permit, or to bring them to pass. Hence, it is the Calvinist who attempts to search the mysteries of God, and declares that which is not revealed.

We have examined this declaration in the light of reason, and have found it to be mere assumption. Then we passed to the Scriptural argument and discovered the same unwarranted conclusion. On the testimony of eminent theologians who are either independent of all distinctive schools, or inclined to the Calvinistic, we find that the passages which have been claimed by the Calvinists do not teach their doctrine. Barnes and Stuart declare that Rom. viii. 29 does not reveal the "how" or the "why," or "on what

[4] "The Shorter Epistles."

grounds" God foreknew, but simply the fact. Alford denies the priority of the divine Will by affirming that the knowledge is co-ordinate with the volition. Brown says that "Whom he did foreknow" can scarcely mean whom he foreordained, because both terms are used, "and the one as the cause of the other." Meyer declares that the term προγ never means anything else than to know beforehand; that the assertion it means anything else in classic usage "can not be at all proved." For a correct understanding of Olshausen's position, the reader must bear in mind the fact that this author is somewhat peculiar in his conception of God's relation to evil. The Divine volition concerns, not wicked personalities as such, but their manifestations. The wicked are such because they resist the Infinite Good, but so far they are foreknown of God, and because he foreknows them as wicked, he positively wills when and how they shall appear in time. But, the reader may reply, this basing of God's will concerning the wicked on his foreknowledge of them, is the generic position of the Arminians. To which I reply, True, but that is no fault of mine; I am now expounding the views of this eminent theologian: that I have accurately interpreted Olshausen the following quotation will show. "Though, therefore, in virtue of his attributes of omniscience and omnipotence, God assuredly both foreknows who they are that will resist his grace, and causes them to appear in definite forms in history, he knows them only as persons who, by abuse of their own free will, have become evil and continued so."[5]

It is fairly certain, therefore, that if these passages

[5] p. 92.

do not teach the doctrine that God foreknows because he first determines, then it is not taught in the Bible. Such passages as merely speak of predestination without alluding to foreknowledge (Eph. i. 5, 11) can not be held as of more importance than these under consideration. Rather such parts of Scripture must be interpreted according to these, for the absence of a term by no means proves that it is not assumed. (Examine the views of Paul and James concerning faith and works.)

Thus we see that this doctrine of Calvinism has no foundation, either in reason or in Scripture. So far the Arminian is satisfied. For the sake of the argument he is perfectly willing to grant that, so far as these passages are concerned, the fact that God does foreknow is the precise thing revealed. Nay, he is even willing to concede that Dr. Hodge is correct in saying that to know "is often to approve and love, it may express the idea of peculiar affection in the case; or it may mean to select or determine upon." All this may, or may not be so, and the Arminian's position remains untouched. For this simply states the fact that God foreknows or loves without explaining why he loves. But advancing a step, the Arminian affirms that God's decrees must be based upon his foreknowledge. This is the only explanation which will consistently harmonize the plain statements of Scripture, not only with themselves, but also with the fundamental postulates of man's moral nature.

The reader has seen what must be the logical conclusion if the fundamental doctrine of Calvinism is accepted. If God has determined—irrespective of what men will freely do in time—who shall, and who

shall not be saved, then surely Christ did not die to save all: the universal invitations of God's Word are sad, perplexing mockeries; God's sincerity can not be maintained, and the Scriptural doctrine of just rewards according to the deeds done in the body is unequivocally contradicted. The Arminian contends that the clearly revealed must be the interpreter of the more obscure parts of Scripture; hence so far as the decrees are explained it must be on the basis of prescience.

I maintain that so far as any solution is accepted, the mind must hold to that view which presents the least difficulty; this is true in the realm of science and should be in that of theology. I shall now endeavor to show that for this reason the Arminian doctrine must be accepted. Notice: (1) The confession of Pictet, who says, "... if election were according to faith and works foreseen, there would be no difficulty in answering the question why God chooses one and not another. It would be because God foresaw that the former would believe and that the latter would remain in unbelief."

(2) Olshausen can not accept the Calvinistic doctrine of "*gratia irresistibiles*"—which is necessary to the system—because it "necessarily draws after it the whole doctrine of predestination, with its most extreme consequences;" again, he says the universality of grace must be held, or else we must "attribute man's agency in resisting grace also to God, in the way in which this is done by the rigid doctrine of predestination: for in that event God would call those who were not elected as it were in mockery, only to put men all the sooner and more surely to confusion; a representation which can only be described as one

of the most remarkable aberrations which the human mind has ever disclosed." Possibly the reader is of the opinion that this is not very favorable to Calvinism. The following from Dr. Kendrick will probably strengthen the supposition :

"The editor deems it proper, here, once for all, to state his dissent from Olshausen's explanation of the profound questions here presented. He can not accept the author's solution of the relation of Divine grace to human salvation. He does not believe that the turning point in election is God's foreknowledge of the non-resistance of his grace on the part of the elect. He believes that there is no antecedent difference between those who accept the grace of God and those who reject it. Those who are saved are subdued by the power (whether called irresistible or not) of Divine grace, yet without any infringement of their free agency, and those who refuse it might in like manner, with precisely the same ease (as in every case it is the work of Omnipotence) be constrained, if it were the Divine pleasure to do so." [6]

(3) As is well known, Alford is so very fair that at times he ignores the analogy of faith and gives what he thinks is the exact meaning of the passage. Consequently, while quite Calvinistic in Romans, he is rather on the Arminian ground in First Timothy : hence, he says of the assertion that God "willeth all men to be saved and to come unto the certain knowledge of the truth" that "On this even God's predestination is contingent." He may have thought that divine predestination is, and at the same time, is not contingent concerning the same thing. But this involves a

6 Pages 80, 92, 133.

logical contradiction : therefore I believe that if predestination is contingent on the acceptance of salvation which is sincerely offered to all, then God has not first determined that some should be passed by, irrespective of their foreseen actions.

(4) A brief consideration of Dr. Moses Stuart's position will close the discussion. As previously stated this author affirms that Rom. viii. 29 does not decide whether the election is from God's "mere good pleasure or from a foresight of their faith and good works." Yet he thinks the question is settled by other texts of Scripture that the merit or obedience of the "elect was not the ground or reason of their regeneration and sanctification. This would be assuming that holiness existed before it did exist ; that it was the ground of that which it followed only as a consequence." [7]

But does this conclusion legitimately follow from the premises? No, certainly not, for on the same basis of argument, evil may be said to have existed before it did exist. As though a foreseen cause, or reason of action is under the necessity of being postulated as actually existing. The very same argument will apply with equal force to the non-elect. If the elect are not foreseen as meeting the requirements of the gospel, but are saved by God's mere good pleasure, then the non-elect are not condemned because of their foreseen non-fulfillment of the gospel requirement, but of the so-called, mere good pleasure of God, which entirely overthrows the plain teaching of the Bible.

But what is meant by the phrase God's good pleas-

7 Commentary, p. 630.

ure? As the term εὐδοκια (eudokia) is used in the first chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians, it may signify real benevolence, or an absolute purpose which must be considered as final. I do not care which of these meanings is selected, for as I have already said, granting that election is according to the Divine Purpose—which I have never denied—yet that purpose is according to knowledge, or humanly speaking, foreknowledge. I lay it down as an axiom that God's good pleasure is according to what he himself has declared. Consequently it can never be legitimately construed as self-contradictory. Dr. Stuart thinks that it should be interpreted as meaning "that God has done this, while the reasons are entirely unknown to us." But that this is not so, I now propose to show from his own concessions. Speaking of the *decretum absolutum*, the determination that the elect "should be saved, irrespectively of their character and actions," he says, "one can not well see how this is to be made out. So much must be true, viz., that they are not regenerated, sanctified, or saved on account of merit: all is from grace, pure grace. If this be all that any one means by the *decretum absolutum*, there can be no reasonable objection made to it. But on the other hand; as God is *omniscient*, and therefore must know every part of every man's character, through all stages of his being; as all things, in their fullest extent, must have always been naked and open to his view; so we can not once imagine, that any decree or purpose in respect to the κλητοὶ can have been made irrespectively of their whole character. Such an irrespection (if I may use the word) is impossible. God has never determined, and from his holy nature never can

determine to save any except such as are conformed to the image of his Son." Then according to Dr. Stuart the reasons for the decree to save the elect are not "entirely unknown to us." No, by no means, for that decree is not "made irrespectively of their whole character."

Now if this language means anything more than the usual Calvinistic terminology—that God foresees because he has previously determined—then it is strongly tinctured with Arminianism. But the matter is susceptible of demonstration beyond all reasonable questioning: he says, "The moment we admit him to be an omniscient and omnipotent God, that moment we admit that he must have foreseen from eternity all the actions of his creatures, all their thoughts and affections and wishes and desires. We can not deny that foreseeing all these with all their consequences, he brought them into being and placed them (for surely it was he who ordered their lot) in circumstances where he knew they would act as he had foreseen they would. It is impossible to deny this, without denying the omniscience of God, and his immutability." [7] The following is to show how God may have an eternal purpose and yet man be a free agent. "Does the certain knowledge we now have of a past event, destroy the free agency of those who were concerned in bringing about that event? Did any previous knowledge of the same necessarily interfere with their free agency? And as to free agency itself, can not God make a creature in his own image, free like himself, rational like himself, the originator of thoughts and volitions like himself? Can this be

[7] p. 635.

disproved? The fact that we are dependent beings, will not prove that we may not be free agents as to the exercise of the powers with which we are endowed,—free in a sense like to that in which God himself as a rational being, is free. Nor will this establish any contingency or uncertainty of events, in the universe. Could not God as well foresee what would be the free and voluntary thought of men, in consequence of the powers which he should give them, as he could foresee thoughts and volitions which would proceed from the operation of eternal causes upon them? Until this can be denied on the ground of reason and argument, the sentiment in question is not justly liable to the charge of introducing the doctrine of casual contingency or uncertainty into the plans of the Divine Mind."[8]

With the exception of the thought concerning the certainty of that which is foreknown, this entire paragraph is permeated with pure Arminianism. In what sense then does Dr. Stuart insist that the foreseen is certain? Why, manifestly in the same sense as I have already granted when considering the views of Rothe, viz., that inasmuch as the Divine Foresight can not be deceived nor mistaken, of all the possibilities, God sees that which will be, and hence to say that it is uncertain is to affirm that that which will be, will or may not be. Any other interpretation of the certainty would necessarily destroy the meaning of his previous affirmation that we are created in God's image, free, "rational like himself, the originator of thoughts and volitions like himself."

At this point I am willing to rest the case. I have

[8] p. 627.

shown by able Calvinistic and independent testimony, that the claim of the Calvinist, God first determines and as a consequence knows who are to be saved, is not legitimately deduced from Scripture. I have shown that Arminianism is the more rational and Scriptural explanation and as such must be accepted. Lastly, I have shown that Calvinists themselves, when fully explaining their system either assume or boldly affirm the Divine Foresight as prior to his decrees.

NOTE I.

Meyer's position is somewhat peculiar; he says, "The contents of ix. 6–29 as they have been unfolded by pure exegesis, certainly exclude, when taken in and by themselves, the idea of a decree of God conditioned by human moral self-activity, as indeed God's absolute activity taken as such by itself can not depend on that of the individual. On the other hand, a fatalistic determinism, the '*tremendum mysterium*' of Calvin, which, following the precedent of Augustine, robs man of his self-determination and free personal attitude towards salvation, and makes him the passive object of divine sovereign will, may just as little be derived as a Pauline doctrine from our passage. It can not be so, because our passage is not to be considered as detached from the following (vs. 30–33, chap. x. xi.); and because, generally, the countless exhortations of the apostle to obedience of faith, to steadfastness of faith and Christian virtue, as well as his admonitions on the possibility of losing salvation, and his warnings

against falling from grace, are just so many evidences against that view, which puts aside the divine will of love, and does away the essence of human morality and responsibility:" his view is this: "As often as we treat only one of the two truths; 'God is absolutely free, and all-efficient,' and 'Man has moral freedom, and is, in virtue of his proper self-determination and responsibility, as *liberum agens*, the author of his salvation or perdition,' and carry it out in a consistent theory, and therefore in a one-sided method, we are compelled to speak in such a manner that the other truth appears to be annulled—only *appears* however; for, in fact, all that takes place in this case is a temporary and conscious withdrawing of attention from the other. In the present instance Paul found himself in this case, and he expresses himself according to this mode of view, not merely in a passing reference, vs. 20, 21, but in the whole reasoning, 6–29." After this passage has been disclosed, Meyer thinks that Paul "allows the claims of both modes of consideration to stand side by side, just as they exist side by side within the limits of human thought."[9]

NOTE II.

The American Edition of Lange's Commentary is so voluminous that it is difficult to convey its position to the reader without numerous citations; hence, I have thought best to present the views of this Calvinistic authority in the form of a Note.

Dr. Lange maintains that "the passage in vs. 29 and 30 contains the whole Divine plan of salvation,

[9] Pages 166-169.

from the first foundation to the ultimate object." He regards the passage in Ephesians i. 4–14 as substantially agreeing with, and as illustrating the present passage. He says, "As the foreknowing here precedes the predestinating, so there the choosing (v. 4) precedes the predestinating (v. 5); from which it follows that both the foreknowing and the electing mean essentially the same thing—an act preceding the predestination. . . . . We may further observe, that a real difference exists between election and foreordination, or predestination, and that the προγινωσκειν can not possibly mean foreknowledge, in God's idea, of subjects already present (for whence would they have come into God's idea?) but that it can only mean the loving and creative sight, in God's intuitive vision, of human personalities for a preliminary ideal existence. The doctrine of predestination of Augustine, of the Middle Ages, and of the Reformers, could not reach this idea of election intellectually (Christian faith has always reached it in spirit), because the distinction between the idea of the individual personality of man and the idea of the 'specimen of every kind' had not yet been definitely attained. It is now clear that such a 'foreknowing' of God in relation to all human individuals must be accepted, because man is an individual thought of God: and that the same must hold good of electing in so far as each individual is distinct in his solitary separation from all other individuals and has a solitary call (see Rev. ii. 17). But it follows from this that the foreknowing of the 'elect,' when it has become manifest, must be accepted in the most emphatic sense, analogously to the fact that Abraham is, in God's typical kingdom, the elect

κατ' ἐξοχήν, and that Christ is the elect in God's real kingdom in the absolute sense, so that all his followers are chosen together with him as organic members, according to their organic relations (Eph. i.). From both propositions it follows, further, that election does not constitute an infinite opposition between such as are ordained to salvation and such as are ordained to condemnation, but an *infinite* difference of destinations for glory: which difference, however, can be the basis of an actual opposition (see Matt. xxv. 24), and therefore is also combined with this. As the foreknowing expresses the collective foundation, the Godlike spiritual nature of the elect as the product and object of Divine love, there is comprised in the electing not only their election from the mass of the world, but also the distinguishing features of their χαρίσματα and character. . . . . The Apostle says οὓς four times, and τούτους three times. After the ideal determinations of personalities themselves, there can now follow the predestination of their ὅρος in time and space, their whole lot (including the previously determined permission and control of the fall). For the foundation of the world corresponds to the history of the world. But the fate of each individual is designed to mature him under *gratia præveniens*, for conversion, and when this object is reached, it is his turn: he is τεταγμένος (Acts xiii. 48)."

While Dr. Riddle regards "these Notes of Dr. Lange" as very just and especially valuable "for minds trained in the school of hyper-Calvinism," still he thinks the problem has not been solved. "The Apostle himself does not do it;" again: commenting

on Lange's notes concerning the clause—"Even for this very purpose have I raised thee up," Dr. Riddle says, "While we must utterly reject, both on lexical and theological grounds, the extreme supralapsarian view: *God created thee, i. e.*, as a hardened sinner; the view of Lange and many modern interpreters is too weak—is out of keeping both with the original transaction and the use here made of it."

For the sake of brevity I will now ask a few leading questions, allowing Doctors Lange, Riddle and Schaff to answer for themselves.

(1) Is the doctrine of absolute predestination Scripturally true? "This passage (Rom. ix. 18) if taken out of its connection, seems to declare an absolute predestination in the supralapsarian sense." —Lange.

On the previous verse, Dr. Riddle says, as we have previously seen, "We must utterly reject, both on lexical and theological grounds, the extreme supralapsarian view: God created thee, *i. e.*, as a hardened sinner." After having spoken adversely concerning Arminian expositors, Dr. Schaff says, "Yet we must guard against the opposite extreme of supralapsarianism, which with fearful logical consistency, makes God the author of the fall of Adam, hence of sin: thus really denying both God's holiness and love and man's accountability, to the ultimate extinguishment of all morality. Many, indeed, have held this view, whose lives, by a happy inconsistency, were far better than their theories. They arrived at this extreme position through a one-sided explanation of this passage, and through the logical consequence of their conception of God's all-determining will. But if we

would not have the Bible prove anything man wishes, we must interpret single passages in their connection with the whole, and according to the analogy of faith." [1]

(2) In what sense is it true that God hardened the heart of Pharaoh? "It is plain, to one acquainted with the Scriptures, that God's hardening of Pharaoh resulted from Pharaoh's having hardened himself; and besides this, there is connected with this the additional fact, that, even though Pharaoh was ripe for the judgment of destruction, God makes the useless man still useful by allowing him to exist longer, and by raising him up, in order, through him, to declare his power and his mercy."—Lange. The following Dr. Riddle approvingly quotes from Dr. Schaff: "All events of history, even all wicked deeds, stand under the guidance of God, without whose will not a hair falls from our heads, much less is a world-historical fact accomplished. God does not cause the evil, but he bends and guides it to his glory." [2]

(3) Is God's decree of reprobation conditional? If so, upon what is it conditioned? Commenting on Rom. ix. 18, Lange says, "Previously, the question was, God's purposes preceding the birth of the children; here, on the contrary, it is the free will with which God dealt with fixed character—Moses, on the one hand, Pharaoh on the other. If this free will be referred to a purpose of God, it is nevertheless not the purpose of *election*, which first settles personality, but the purpose of ordination, which, in the establishment of its destiny, presupposes its conduct. Consequently,

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1 p. 329

2 Pages 319, 315.

because this purpose is conditional, God is still left free to have mercy on the real Moses, just as he is free to harden the still existing Pharaoh." "While human goodness is the effect of Divine love and grace, on the contrary, human wickedness is the cause of Divine hatred and abhorrence ; and on that account alone can it be the object of the punitive wrath and condemnatory decree of God. Were evil the effect of his own agency, he would be obliged to condemn himself—which is irrational and blasphemous."—Schaff.

This eminent scholar so emphatically repudiates one-half of Calvinism, that fairness demands a fuller elucidation of his views : "The hate of God toward Esau and his race can not be sundered from their evil life, their obduracy against God and enmity to his people. It is true, verse 11 (with which, however, verse 13 does not stand so closely connected as verse 12) seems to represent not only the love of God, but his hatred as transferred even into the mother's womb. But it must not be forgotten that, to the omniscient One, there is no distinction of time, and all the future is to him present. Besides, an essential distinction must be made between the relation of God to good and evil, to avoid unscriptural error. God loves the good, because he produces the very good that is in them : and he elects them, not *on account* of their faith and their holiness, but to faith and holiness. But it can not be said, on the other hand, that he hates the evil men because he produces the very evil that is in them ; for that would be absurd, and destroy his holiness." Again he says, "There is an eternal predestination of believers unto holiness and blessedness, and hence they must ascribe all the glory of their redemption,

from beginning to end, to the unmerited grace of God alone. . . . . There is no Divine foreordination of sin as sin, although he has foreseen it from all eternity, and with respect to redemption, permitted it, while constantly overruling it to his purposes. Hence, those who are lost are lost through their own fault, and must blame their own unbelief, which rejects the means of salvation proffered them by God."

Dr. Riddle remarks, "That these positions are not reconcilable by human logic is evident from the discussions on the subject; but this can not of itself, disprove their truth. It is the old and ever-recurring mystery of the origin of evil." [3]

[3] p. 329.

# PART III.

## CALVINISM CONTRARY TO MAN'S MORAL NATURE.

"There are within us certain moral instincts that are as valuable as anything that the Bible can teach us; in fact, instincts of such a character that without them, no teachings of the Bible would be of any value. The Bible was made for man, not man for the Bible. These instincts are older than the Bible. These instincts are as divine as the Bible: as much God's own workmanship as the Bible, and the meaning of the Bible when there is any possible question of interpretation, is to be tested by them."

—*Rev. C. H. Parkhurst, D. D.*

# PART III.

## CHAPTER I.

### Calvinism Makes God the Author of Sin.

This is a serious charge to bring against any system of thought. But in this instance the seriousness of the indictment is greatly augmented because Calvinism claims to be the true Theology which is consistently taught in the Divine Revelation.

Throughout Part II. the reader has had ample opportunity to test this claim. He has seen that Calvinism not only denies its own assertions but also the clearly revealed and most emphatic declarations of God's Word. He has observed that even in the profound—and to many, inexplicable—subject of Divine Foreknowledge, the Calvinist has not the Scriptural verification so often and confidently claimed. In the remainder of this discussion I shall attempt to show that the Bible and man's moral nature speak the same language.

### SECTION I.

#### *No Absolute Evil in the Universe.*

The following from Dr. Wm. Bates and quoted approvingly by Dr. Samuel Hopkins shows how God and sin are related. "Sin, in its own nature, hath no tendency to good, it is not an apt medium, hath no proper efficacy to promote the glory of God; so far

is it from a direct contributing to it, that, on the contrary it is most real dishonor to him. But as a black ground in a picture, which in itself only defiles, when placed by art, sets off the brighter colors and brightens their beauty, so the evil of sin, which considered absolutely, obscures the glory of God, yet, by the overruling disposition of his providence, it serves to illustrate his name, and makes it more glorious in the esteem of creatures. Without the sin of man, there had been no place for the most perfect exercise of his goodness." [1]

Following this Dr. Hopkins says: "There can nothing take place under the care and government of an infinitely powerful, wise and good Being that is not on the whole wisest and best; that is, for the general good; therefore, though there be things which are in themselves evil, even in their own nature and tendency, such as sin and misery; yet, considered in their connection with the whole and as they are necessary in the best system to accomplish the greatest good, the most important and best ends, they are in this view desirable good, and not evil. And in this view 'there is no absolute evil in the universe.' There are evils in themselves considered, but considered as connected with the whole, they are not evil but good." [2]

This reminds us of Pope's couplet

> "All discord, harmony, not understood;
> All partial evil, universal good:"

and of Carlyle's famous words that we are "to look on sin and crime as not hindrances, but to honor and

1 "Harmony of the Divine Attributes." 3d. Edition, p. 81.
2 "Works." Vol. I., p. 92.

love them as furtherances of what is holy." Doubtless Dr. Hopkins would have indignantly denied the charge of pantheism, but beyond all controversy his thought is permeated with its spirit. As such it has its complete denial in the words of the prophet Isaiah, "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness: that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter" (v. 20).

## SECTION II.

### *God the Efficient Cause of Sin.*

Let us continue the testimony of Dr. Hopkins: he says, "God does superintend and direct with regard to every instance of sin. He orders how much sin there shall be, and effectually restrains and prevents all that which he would not have take place. Men are, with respect to this, absolutely under his direction and control." From this he proceeds to show that sin could not have originated in the creature, for why should the will put forth a volition contrary to the divinely constituted nature? Nor can it be in the sin itself, for upon that supposition the effect is its own cause, hence we must look to Him who is the First Cause of everything; speaking of the sinner he says, "Something must have taken place previous to his sin, and in which the sinner had no hand with which his sin was so connected as to render it certain that sin would take place just as it does;" his conclusion is, "Moral evil could not exist unless it were the will of God, and his choice that it should exist rather than not. And from this it is certain that it is wisest and best in his view that sin should exist. And in thus willing what was wisest

and best, and foreordaining that it should come to pass, God exercised his wisdom and goodness; and in this view and sense is really the origin and cause of moral evil, as really as he is of the existence of anything that he wills, however inconceivable the mode and manner of the origin and existence of this event may be, and however different from that of any other." [3]

Of Pharaoh, Dr. Nathanael Emmons says God "determined, therefore, to operate on his heart itself and cause him to put forth certain evil exercises in the view of certain external motives"; again, "If saints can work out their salvation, under a positive influence of the Deity, then sinners can work out their own destruction under his positive influence." Of Adam he says, "His first sin was a free, voluntary exercise, produced by a divine operation in the view of motives."

Meeting an objection which was, and even now is popular with a certain class of Calvinists, Emmons says, "Many are disposed to make a distinction here, and to ascribe only the good actions of men to the divine agency, while they ascribe their bad ones to the divine permission. But there appears no ground for this distinction in Scripture or reason. Men are no more capable of acting independently of God in one instance than in another. If they need any kind or degree of divine agency in doing good, they need precisely the same kind and degree of divine agency in doing evil. This is the dictate of reason and the Scripture says the same." [4]

Dr. H. B. Smith says of Emmons, "The absolute,

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[3] Pages 98-109.

[4] "Works." Vol. II., pp. 392, 420, 423, 441.

supreme, irresistible, all-embracing, all-producing, all-sustaining energy of the divine will, making every event and act march to the music of the divine glory is unquestionably the predominant idea of this most 'consistent' of Calvinists." Doubtless this is "simple" and comprehensive, yet "it is a very mechanical and arbitrary hypothesis." [5]

Calvin says, "If God merely foresaw human events, and did not also arrange and dispose of them at his pleasure, there might be room for agitating the question, how far this foreknowledge amounts to necessity; but since he foresees the things which are to happen simply because he has decreed that they are so to happen, it is vain to debate about prescience while it is clear that all events take place by his sovereign appointment." [6]

In Melancthon's commentary on Romans of 1525, we are taught that "God wrought all things, evil as well as good; that he was the author of David's adultery, and the treason of Judas, as well as of Paul's conversion." [7]

## SECTION III.

*The Infra or Sublapsarians declare that the Views of the Supralapsarians legitimately make God the Author of Sin.*

Noticing this charge, Dr. John Dick says, "I acknowledge that this horrible inference seems to be naturally deduced from the Supralapsarian scheme, which represents the introduction of sin as the ap-

5 "Faith and Philosophy," pp. 226, 227.
6 "Inst." B. III., Ch. XXIII., Sec. 6.
7 Bledsoe's "Theodicy," p. 91

pointed means of executing the purpose of the Almighty respecting the final doom of his creatures;" again, "There is something in this system repugnant to our ideas of the character of God, whom it represents rather as a despot than the Father of the universe." [8]

Venema testifies as follows: "The Supralapsarian system has no foundation to rest upon. . . . . Their whole system is completely irreconcilable with the justice of God. Nay, it is in direct opposition to that justice which demands that when punishment is exacted, or when any one is destined to destruction, there be a reason founded in equity for adopting such a course. . . . . But how inconsistent is it with his justice thus arbitrarily to appoint men to such an end, and for the purpose of carrying it into effect to decree their fall." [9]

Isaac Watts says, "The doctrine of reprobation, in the most severe and absolute sense of it, stands in a direct contradiction to all our notions of kindness and love to others, in which the blessed God is set forth as our example, that our reason can not tell how to receive it." [1]

In previous pages the reader has been informed of Dr. Schaff's view: but for emphasis I will here reproduce a few words: he says, "Supralapsarianism . . . . with fearful logical consistency, makes God the author of the fall of Adam, hence of sin." [2]

Dr. Hodge opposes this scheme because "it is not consistent with the Scriptural exhibition of the character of God. He is declared to be a God of mercy

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8 "Lectures," pp. 373, 369.
9 "Institutes," pp. 310, 311, 312.
1 "Works." Vol. III., p. 476.
2 Lange's "Romans," p. 329.

and justice. But it is not compatible with these divine attributes that men should be foreordained to misery and eternal death as innocent, that is, before they had apostatized from God." [3]

In concluding this section, the reader's serious consideration is invited to this clearly established fact, viz., that one class of Calvinists is charged by another class with holding views which legitimately make God the author of sin. As we continue our investigation, we shall be reminded of David's exclamation, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." Possibly we shall see that fulfillment of the Saviour's words, "Every kingdom divided against itself, is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself, shall not stand" (Matt. xii. 25).

## SECTION IV.

### *How Some Calvinists Show that God is not the Author of Sin.*

Dr. Griffin is more cautious than Emmons and Hopkins; while he earnestly advocates the doctrine of Divine Efficiency, he is quite guarded in his expressions concerning God's relation to sin. He thinks the Deity "has the absolute control of mind in all its common operations," but does not inform us of the method. "Whether he does this by the mere force of motives adapted to the existing temper, or sometimes by a lower sort of efficiency, not however productive of sin, I will not determine." So far Dr. Griffin can not be said to teach, directly or indirectly, that God is

[3] "Theology," Vol. II., p. 319

the author of sin. But in my opinion such is not the case when he is explaining how sinless creatures are induced to do wrong. This is worthy of careful attention. "If sinless creatures are not dependent on God for holiness, how will you account for the fall of any?" After quoting from Whitby to the effect that the greatest good proposed, or the greatest evil threatened, when equally believed and reflected on, will always move the will to accept or refuse, he says, "Thus while the heart is right and the mind free, proper motives, set clearly before the understanding, will certainly awaken right affections. And temptations to sin while the heart is right, will instantly be rejected. . . . . How then can a holy being apostatize? Not until the heart ceases to be inclined to fall in with the motive which moved it before. That cessation can not be produced by good motives, and before it takes place bad motives can not operate. It can not, therefore, be the effect of motives. It must result from some influence, or some withdrawment of influence, behind the scene. If it results from a positive influence, God must be the efficient cause of sin; if it results from the withdrawment of an influence, the influence withdrawn was that which before inclined the heart to holy action; and that is the very efficiency for which we plead. Without resorting to efficiency and its withdrawment, how can we account for the fall of holy beings?"[4]

Here is undersigned testimony as to the legitimate tendency of Emmons' theology. Dr. Griffin concedes that God must be the efficient cause of sin if he exerts a positive influence. His own view is but a step removed from that of Emmons, for he maintains that

[4] "Divine Efficiency," pp. 95, 167, 168.

the creature could not possibly sin were it not for the divine withdrawment.

This is a bold position. Dr. Griffin does not even pretend that this withdrawment is because of anything evil in the creature. Nay, he most emphatically declares that without this withdrawment the creature can not possibly sin. Why then, should God withdraw his influence? Clearly for no other reason than that he desires sin. This, it must be confessed, solves the mysterious problem of the existence of sin. But what a solution! God could have prevented every creature from sinning. Nay, there was not the least danger that any soul would have sinned had this divine influence been continued. Hence, that sin may come, that this earth may be made as much the home of Satan as is possible, this eminent theologian conceives God as withdrawing the plank on which his child is standing, so that he may fall into the clutches of the arch enemy. Why is this not blasphemy? Why does it not make God the author of sin? Because it is theology. Because the Calvinist claims—as I shall show in due time—that God can do anything, and no man dare say, This is wrong. In the same circumstances a man would be arrested and tried for murder.

Let us now see how Toplady avoids the difficulty. "It is a known and very just maxim of the schools, *effectus sequitur causam proximam.* 'An effect follows from and is to be ascribed to the last immediate cause that produced it.' Thus, for instance, if I hold a book, or a stone in my hand, my holding it is the immediate cause of its not falling; but if I let go, my letting go is not the immediate cause of its falling; it

is carried downward by its own gravity, which is, therefore, the *causa proxima effectus*, the proper and immediate cause of its descent. It is true, if I had kept my hold of it, it would not have fallen ; yet, still the immediate, direct cause of its fall is its own weight, not my quitting my hold. The application of this to the providence of God as concerned in sinful events is easy. Without God there could have been no creation ; without creation, no creatures ; without creatures, no sin. Yet is not sin chargeable on God, for *effectus sequitur causam proximam*." [5]

A man enters your room at midnight: stealthily approaching your bedside he holds a keen blade directly over your heart. Carefully measuring the distance, calmly calculating on the law of gravity, without giving the knife the least momemtum, he finally yields his grasp, and his purpose is accomplished. As he walks away in the darkness, a feeling of awe comes over him: his conscience is at work: it is saying, You are a murderer, you are a murderer. Startled by this bold accusation, he cries out, Who says that? It is a lie. I did not kill him ; for *effectus sequitur proximam*." With this eminently truthful and consistent remark he retires to his virtuous couch, and is soon lost in the sleep of innocence.

Moreover, I fail to see the logical force of Toplady's assertion, "Without creation no creature, without creature no sin." It is true, Calvinists are very zealous for the Divine glory, and consequently have always maintained that sin enhances God's honor. Surely, he could have had creatures without sin, for according to this orthodox theology, God can do all

[5] "Works," p. 699.

things. Hence Toplady must mean that God, desiring to increase his glory through sin, made the creature the legitimate vehicle for its introduction.

Dr. Dick is disposed to be fair with his opponents: of this subject he says, "Here we come to a question which has engaged the attention, and exercised the ingenuity, and perplexed the wits of men in every age. If God has foreordained whatever comes to pass, the whole series of events is necessary and human liberty is taken away. Men are passive instruments in the hands of their Maker; they can do nothing but what they are secretly and irresistibly impelled to do; they are not, therefore, responsible for their actions; and God is the author of sin."

This is the Arminian objection, and our thanks are due to Dr. Dick for its admirable arrangement. How does he meet it? He notices several methods, but does not deem them very satisfactory: his solution is this. "It is a more intelligible method to explain the subject by the doctrine which makes liberty consist in the power of acting according to the prevailing inclination, or the motive which appears strongest to the mind. Those actions are free which are the effects of volition. In whatever manner the state of mind which gave rise to volition has been produced, the liberty of the agent is neither greater nor less. It is his will alone which is to be considered, and not the means by which it has been determined.

If God foreordained certain actions, and placed men in such circumstances that the actions would certainly take place agreeably to the laws of the mind, men are, nevertheless moral agents, because they act voluntarily and are responsible for the actions which

consent has made their own. Liberty does not consist in the power of acting or not acting, but in acting from choice. The choice is determined by something in the mind itself, or by something external influencing the mind; but whatever is the cause, the choice makes the action free, and the agent accountable. If this definition of liberty be admitted, you will perceive that it is possible to reconcile the freedom of the will with absolute decrees." [6]

A brief consideration will disclose the sophism of this argument: (1) Admitting that his definition of liberty be correct the solution does not solve the problem, our author being the criterion: after the above quotation he says, "But we have not got rid of every difficulty: by this theory human actions appear to be as necessary as the motions of matter according to the laws of gravitation and attraction; and man seems to be a machine, conscious of his movements, and consenting to them, but impelled by something different from himself."

Surely this is a frank confession and I see no reason why it should not be accepted and the so-called solution rejected. (2) I by no means accept Dr. Dick's definition of liberty: if liberty does not consist in the power to choose, or to refrain from choosing at any given time, then man is not free: then not only does he seem to be, but in fact he is "a machine, conscious of his movements, and consenting to them, but impelled by something different from himself." The doctrine of the self-determining power of the will, or the power of contrary choice, is no longer a mere Arminian postulate. It is now quite universally con-

[6] "Lectures," pp. 357, 358.

ceded, not only by independent thinkers, but also by eminent Calvinists. Cousin says, "I am conscious of this sovereign power of the will. I feel in myself, before its determination, the force that can determine itself in such a manner, or in such another. At the same time I will this or that, I am equally conscious of the power to will the opposite: I am conscious of being master of my resolution, of the ability to arrest it, continue it, repress it." [7]

"By the liberty of a Moral agent," says Reid, "I understand a power over the determinations of his own will. If in any action he had power to will what he did, or not to will it, in that action he is free. But if, in every voluntary action, the determination of his will be the necessary consequence of something involuntary in the state of his mind, or of something in his external circumstance he is not free; he has not what I call the Liberty of a Moral agent, but is subject to necessity." [8]

Although Dr. McCosh holds to a certain kind of mental causation, his testimony on this point is emphatic. "When it is said that the will is free, there is more declared than simply that we can do what we please. It is implied, farther, that the choice lies within the voluntary power of the mind, and that we could have willed otherwise if we had pleased. The mind has not only the power of action, but the anterior, and far more important power of choice. The freedom of the mind does not consist in the effect following the volition, as for instance, in the movement of the arm following the will to move it, but the

7 Cocker's "Theistic Conception of the World," p. 382.

8 Fleming's "Moral Philosphy," p. 194

power of the mind to form the volition in the exercise of its voluntary functions. . . . . In making this choice we are no doubt swayed by considerations, but these have their force given them by the will itself, which may set a high value upon them, but which may also, if it please, set them at defiance." [9]

Dr. Dick's definition of liberty is decidedly fallacious, as also are his conclusions, for (3) even granting the correctness of his definition, the solution does not touch the real point at issue. For the sake of the argument let me grant that upon his supposition man is responsible for his volitions. Suppose I concede that so far as man is concerned, no temptation whatsoever, no matter how, or by whom presented, can in the least palliate the sin of yielding. What then? Why, clearly, this pertains to the individual's guilt, and to him alone. But the real question is this: What is God's relation to the tempted? Granting that the creature is guilty, does Dr. Dick's supposition free God from a foul imputation? I claim it does not, for it is reasonably and Scripturally true that he who tempts—in the sense now under consideration—to sin, he who induces a sinful volition is a party to the transaction, and hence, is so far criminally guilty. He who tempts to evil has previously determined to seek the harm of the tempted, and consequently must bear his share of the blame. Balaam seduced the Israelites into sin: they were guilty for yielding to his solic itations and were punished. Was the prophet innocent? The Scriptures convey the opposite opinion; his doctrine is condemned in Rev. ii. 14; he is said to have loved the wages of unrighteousness (II.

9 "Divine Government," 1870, p, 271.

Pet. ii. 15) ; was slain as an enemy of the people of God (Num. xxxi. 8).

All human volitions are to be referred to some source as their legitimate cause. So far forth as this source is predicated of God, to that extent does this affirmation make him the author of sin.

The following testimony given by the Princeton Essayists is an admirable rejoinder to the argument of Dr. Dick. "It is, moreover, alleged, that we are so constituted, that we judge of the morality of actions without any reference to their cause. . . . . This theory has many advocates in our country and is considered an improvement of the old Calvinistic theory. But it is repugnant to common sense, and the arguments employed in its defense are sophistical. Sin is sin, by whomsoever produced." [1]

Let us now examine the views of President Edwards. [2] "If by the author of sin is meant the permitter, or a not-hinderer of sin, and at the same time, a disposer of the state of events, in such a manner, for wise, holy, and most excellent ends and purposes,

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1 "Theological Essays From Princeton Review," 1846, pp. 73-75.

2 It is not necessary that the reader be detained by a consideration of the views of Edwards concerning liberty, and the will as swayed by the strongest motive, or the greatest apparent good, because (1) Dick's doctrine is identical with that of Edwards', from whom, it is more than probable, he obtained it. (2) The acceptance of the doctrine that the will is self-determining, has the power of contrary choice, necessarily overthrows the Edwardean theory. (3) It is now generally conceded that the celebrated dictum of Edwards, has not been, and is not capable of being, demonstrated. McCosh says, "In asserting that the will is swayed by motives as thus defined, we are affirming nothing to the point. . . . . We are making no progress: we are swinging upon a hinge in advancing and readvancing such maxims." "Divine Government," p 273, note. See also Article "The Problem of the Human Will," by Dr. Henry Calderwood, "Princeton Review," September, 1879, p. 343. Hodge's "Theology," Vol. II., p. 289.

that sin, if it be permitted or not hindered, will most certainly and infallibly follow: I say, if this be all that is meant, by being the author of sin, I do not deny that God is the author of sin—though I dislike and reject the phrase, as that which by use and custom is apt to carry another sense." Again, "If God disposes all events, so that the infallible existence is decided by his Providence, then he, doubtless, thus orders and decides things *knowingly* and on *design*. God does not do what he does, nor order what he orders, accidentally or unawares: either *without* or *beside* his intention." [3] Here are four affirmations; viz., (1) God has wise, holy and most excellent ends to be secured by means of sin. (2) He orders or disposes events in such a way that sin will infallibly occur. (3) He does this designedly: and (4) He is not the author of sin.

Now, in all seriousness and fairness, I ask the reader, Is this, can this be true? Your child is well, and free from all danger of sickness. Scarlet fever is in the neighborhood: you do not warn the child of the danger, nor do you exercise any power to keep him away from the contagious disease. Nay, you are using your knowledge so as to have that child led—freely to be sure—into the danger in order that he may imbibe the poison and die. You are successful, and are complacently enjoying your enhanced glory, when you are arrested by an indignant community on the charge of deliberate murder. This, however, you deny. You admit that he died under your government; that you purposely led him into danger; that you designed his death. But you are no murderer

[3] "Works," Ed. 1856, Vol. II., pp. 157, 179.

because having certain good and wise ends to secure by his death, your deed was right.

I think the examination would stop. Such a justification would outrage the sense of justice in the breast of a heathen. Public opinion would inexorably demand your speedy execution. Yet such is the pitiable excuse for the Divine procedure offered by this most celebrated American theologian. Listen: "I answer, that for God to dispose and permit evil in the manner that has been spoken of, is not to do evil that good may come; for it is not to do evil at all. In order to a thing's being morally evil, there must be one of these things belonging to it; either it must be a thing unfit and unsuitable in its own nature; or it must have a bad tendency; or it must proceed from an evil disposition and be done for an evil end. But neither of these things can be attributed to God's ordering and permitting such events as the immoral acts of creatures, for good ends."

I do not wonder that, as Chalmers has said, "Conspicuous infidels and semi-infidels . . . . have triumphed in the book of Edwards as that which set a conclusive seal on their principles," for if much of his writing is not logically blasphemous, I am ignorant of the meaning of the term. He justifies his position by three arguments or affirmations, viz., (1) That it is eminently fit and proper that God should order and permit the sinful acts of his creatures. (2) To do this is not of a bad, but rather of a most glorious tendency. (3) The motive is good and the actual result is good.[5] Here are as many fallacies as points. Let us candidly consider them. He first maintains it is fit

[5] p. 164.

for God to order and permit sin because he is "the Being who has infinite wisdom and is the Maker, Owner and Supreme Governor of the world." This is based on the assumption that because God is infinitely wise and because he is the Governor of the world he may do that which in other circumstances would be wrong. This he substantially acknowledges when he says, "It may be unfit, and so immoral, for any other beings to go about to order this affair." Why? "Because they are not possessed of a wisdom that in any manner fits them for it; and, in other respects they are not fit to be trusted with this affair; nor does it belong to them, they not being the owners and lords of the universe."

Beyond all controversy this part of the argument assumes that infinite wisdom and power make right. This was doubtless considered a sound principle in the time of Edwards, but as we shall presently see, it has long since been rejected as philosophically and theologically pernicious. His second argument contradicts the first. If, as he here affirms, it is best that sin "should come to pass" then why should it be immoral for any other being "to go about to order this affair"? To be sure, such a person might be kindly reproved for meddling with matters outside his sphere, but if it be best that moral evil should come, certainly it is too strong language to call him immoral. Nay, according to Edwards himself, this intermeddler can not be immoral, for "what is aimed at is good, and good is the actual issue, in the final result of things." True, this last remark is applied to God by this great metaphysician, but I affirm if a

thing is good because the aim is good and the issue good, the principle is valid for man as well as for God. Moreover one can not see why God should hate moral evil when it is working out such glorious results. Says Edwards, "There is no inconsistence in supposing that God may hate a thing as it is in itself and considered simply as evil, and yet that it may be his will it should come to pass considering all consequences." If this be true, God "designedly" wills the permission of that which he eternally hates, and, therefore, forbids. The reader has noticed this absurdity in the discussion of the Atonement. It is one of the fatal positions of Calvinism. It is an essential part of the system. All attempts to evade it have resulted in unequivocal contradictions or in arguments which can not endure the test of sober thought. To say God does not will sin as sin, is of no avail. To hate that which is willed, to forbid that which is designed, and which terminates in the most glorious results, confound all intellectual and moral distinctions. Sooner or later, the heart and conscience of the race will repudiate the theology which indorses such methods. His third position is identical with the maxims of the Jesuits. There is nothing but a verbal difference between them. Sin is made the means of good according to Edwards as deception is the means of accomplishing the holy (?) purposes of the Jesuits. Have they not said, We do not will, nor select evil things because they are evil, or even as evil, but we use them as the occasion or means of obtaining that which is for the best results, and which we could not otherwise obtain? Lastly, what a confession for a Calvinist to make! That the Infinite God, whose power is absolute, whose

wisdom is past finding out, should be so weak and inefficient as to be obliged to resort to the aid of moral evil. Where is the much boasted divine attribute of Omnipotence?

## SECTION V.

### *God's Will Not the Criterion of Right.*

The previous section involved the questions, Is a thing necessarily right because God does it? What is the ultimate standard of right? In the previous pages I tried to show that the arguments of the Calvinist by which he sought the Divine vindication were illegitimate because if the same things which are predicated of God were done by man he would be universally condemned by the instinctive sense of justice. Doubtless the Arminian agrees with the Calvinist in asserting that God's will is always right. I do not believe that God will ever do wrong. This, however, is one thing, and an entirely different remark which is often affirmed by the Calvinist, viz., that God does as is predicated and therefore we must not reply against God. This I emphatically deny. But how shall the question be settled? Clearly by no other way than that here proposed.

First find what is the ultimate criterion of right, and then discover, if possible, what are the sponta neous affirmations of man's moral nature. If they sustain the arguments of the Calvinist, then I must and do acknowledge my error. On the contrary, if they do not thus uphold him, he must be fundamentally wrong. Let us notice: I. What is the question? It

is not that God can not do things which would be wrong for man to do. No sane person will undertake to defend this position. Beyond all controversy it is right for God to do many things which would be very wrong for man to do. As Creator, Preserver and Judge of the universe, God has certain powers which necessarily can not be assumed by any creature. It is not necessary to enumerate these things. The mind instantly perceives the truth of the proposition. The real question is this: Has man any rights which his Maker is in duty bound to regard? If God says one thing and does the opposite, if he brings his children into sin while they are innocent, and then punishes them for that which he was the direct or indirect cause of their doing, and which he desired them to do, are the moral sentiments to be choked and condemned because they spontaneously array themselves against such proceedings?

II. What are some of the consequences deducible from the proposition, God's will is the criterion of right? (1) It robs the Deity of moral character. If his will makes right, then anything which he might choose would become morally obligatory. Instead of being guided by moral considerations his will would make those considerations, and hence he could not be said to be holy. For holiness is the result of a holy choice, which necessarily presupposes something holy to be chosen. (2) If God's will makes right, then we have only to suppose a change in that will, and our moral distinctions would instantly vanish. Or, God might will differently in different parts of the universe, and then would follow as a consequence the remark of John Stuart Mill that somewhere in the

universe two and two might make five. True, there is no probability of the Divine Will thus changing, but philosophy and theology demand a broader and more secure foundation than such a supposition. (3) Again, if God's will makes right, we have only to imagine that he had refrained from willing, and as a consequence all actions would have been the same. Theft, impurity, murder, the same as honesty, chastity and love.

III. Rejecting as we must, this first supposition, that the divine will makes right, where shall we place the ultimate standard? In the nature of things, or the nature of God? In favor of the former there are many eminent metaphysicians and theologians. Such names as Cudworth, Price, Clark, Butler, Reid, Stewart, Wardlaw and Mackintosh are certainly not to be despised nor treated with little respect. With these philosophers agree many celebrated Calvinists. Emmons in a sermon on "The Essential and Immutable Distinction Between Right and Wrong" says, "As virtue and vice, therefore, take their origin from the nature of things, so the difference between moral good and moral evil is as immutable as the nature of things, from which it results. . . . . The difference between virtue and vice does not depend upon the *will* of God, because his will can not make nor destroy this immutable difference. And it is no more to the dishonor of God to suppose that he can not, than that he can perform impossibilities."[6]

Dr. Robt. J. Breckenridge says, "To us no doubt

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[6] As quoted in Dr. H. B. Smith's "Faith and Philosophy," p. 223.

all that God wills is right; but in God himself there is a very wide difference between saying, he wills anything because it is right—that is, because it accords with all his Perfections—and saying anything is right, that is, accords with his Perfections, merely because he wills it. A distinction which draws after it—remote and subtle as it may be supposed to be—the whole nature of moral good and evil, and the whole economy of salvation. For the necessary and immutable distinction between good and evil; and the foundation of all religion both in God and human nature; and the rule of God's infinite justice; and the need of a Saviour; are all subverted and every logical foundation taken away from them as soon as the mere will of God is substituted for the perfection of all his attributes, and the Holiness of his adorable nature, as the ultimate ground of moral distinctions, and the fundamental basis of right actions. Good and evil depend on law, not on nature, was an apothegm of the ancient atheists—who only substituted nature for God in the proposition. The number is not small amongst Christian teachers, who, under the guise of evangelical contempt for human reason and extraordinary devotion to the honor of God's revealed will, still retain in a somewhat different logical form, and perhaps, in a somewhat mitigated degree, the essential poison of this detestable paradox." [7]

Chalmers thus puts the question: "Wherein is it that the rightness of morality lies? or whence is it that this rightness is derived? Whether, more particularly it have an independent rightness of its own,

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[7] "The Knowledge of God, Objectively Considered," p. 293.

or it be right only because God wills it? It might be proper to state that between the two terms of the alternative as last put, our clear preference—or rather, our absolute and entire conviction—is on the side of the former. We hold that morality has a stable, inherent, and essential rightness in itself, and that anterior to or apart from, whether the tacit or expressed will of any being in the universe—that it had a subsistence and a character before that any creatures were made who could be the subjects of a will or a government at all, and when no other existed besides God himself to exemplify its virtues and its graces." Again he says, "Now it is here that we join issue with our antagonists, and affirm that God is no more the Creator of virtue than he is of truth—that justice and benevolence were virtues previous to any forthputting of will or jurisprudence on his part, and that he no more ordained them to be virtues than he ordained that the three angles of a triangle should be equal to two right angles." [8]

To the same effect speaks Dr. McCosh, who says, "Divines often put it in the wrong place psychologically and logically; and represent the Divine Will and the Divine Command as the ground of virtue. Doubtless, they intend thereby to benefit the cause of religion, but they are in reality doing it serious injury. The proper statement is that a deed is good, not because God wills it, but that he wills it because it is good. To reverse this order, is to unsettle, as it appears to us, the foundations of morality." [9] Sub-

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8 "Institutes of Theology." Vol. I., pp. 22, 23.

9 "Divine Government," p. 321.

stantially, the same view was held by Charnock, Edwards, Bellamy, Dwight, and Robert Hall.

It is, however, regarded by some eminent scholars as liable to one serious objection; namely, it makes the right or the good outside, and therefore independent of God. Hence, they conceive the ultimate standard of ethics to be in the Nature of God, which they think escapes the difficulty just now named, and also the dangerous position of making the Divine Will the criterion of morality. Such was the real view of Chalmers and, if I mistake not, is taught in the works of Dr. Mark Hopkins—with one modification—the substituting of "character" for "nature" of Deity. On this supposition the will of God would choose in accordance with his nature, thus making his will ethically right.[1] If God's will does not make right, but if on the contrary it is guided by the law of right, it is fair to suppose the free creatures of God are similarly constituted. Such is the fact as demonstrated by experience. The moral nature of man is the basis of all communication between heaven and earth: A fallen race demands divine interposition. The written revelation supplements, but does not contradict that which is declared in the very constitution of man. Should it do this, that would at once suffice to show its spuriousness. Hence, as a fact the Bible always assumes that man has some knowledge of right

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[1] Dorner holds "that God is a moral being first, by necessity of nature; secondly, by his own free act, and thirdly, that on the ground of both together, he is eternally self-conscious, free and holy love." Martensen's position is quite similar. God "wills the good, because it is good in itself; not, however, as something extant outside of him, but because the good is in his own eternal essence."

and wrong. It appeals to this instinctive sense of right. It urges the claims of God because they are inherently right. It represents God as being not merely willing, but anxious to meet his wayward children, and by calm reason convince them of their need and of his love.

While it is not denied that the Scriptures—and especially the Holy Spirit—quicken, enlighten and guide the moral judgments, it is emphatically true that in their fundamental utterances, they are as independent of the written revelation as God's nature is independent of his will. Consequently, it is not irreverent for man to expect that God will always do right. It is not blasphemous to subject the arguments of those who seek his vindication to a rigid test, and to examine them in the light of the spontaneous affirmations of the moral faculty.

The principle for which I am here contending is clearly seen and forcibly expressed by Edwards, who says, "We never could have any notion what understanding or volition, love or hatred are, either in created spirits or in God, if we had never experienced what understanding and volition, love and hatred are in our own minds. Knowing what they are by consciousness, we can add degrees, and deny limits, and remove changeableness and other imperfections, and ascribe them to God, which is the only way we come to be capable of conceiving of anything in the Deity." [2]

And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him. For if our heart

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2 "Works." Vol. II., p. 287

condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God" (1. John iii. 19–21).

If my reasoning be correct we have now reached the position where we can fairly decide to what extent the Calvinistic arguments vindicate the Divine Government. In the previous section the reader had the opportunity of examining the views of Griffin, Toplady, Dick and Edwards. The first of this celebrated company maintains that God withdrew his influence from Adam in order that sin might occur. Mark, not for sin, because on his theory sin was impossible prior to that withdrawment. The second adopts the scholastic maxim that "an effect follows from, and is to be ascribed to, the last immediate cause that produced it." If God had kept hold of the soul there would have been no fall, and if no fall, no sin; "Yet is not sin chargeable on God: for *effectus sequitur causam proximam.*"

The third view not only adopts a fallacious definition of liberty, but claims that a tempter to a sinful act is not to be held as a *particeps criminis* to the transaction: while Edwards maintains that God can designedly order sin without being in the least contaminated thereby; although the very same thing in man would "be unfit and so immoral."

Now I claim that these positions do not vindicate the character of God, as predicated by the Calvinists. I claim that they are everlastingly at war with man's moral convictions: that in the same circumstances the spontaneous affirmations of human justice would

unqualifiedly condemn any man guilty of such acts: that God is not, can not be such a Father, of whom it is said, "He can not be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man."

## SECTION VI.

*The Infralapsarian Scheme. Does it solve the Problem?*

Dr. Robert Aikman has said that all Presbyterians are "either Supralapsarians or Sublapsarians—or, as Dr. Hodge prefers to say of the latter, Infralapsarians." These terms refer to the supposed order of the decrees. The Supralapsarians maintain that "God in order to manifest his grace and justice selected from creatable men (*i. e.*, from men to be created) a certain number to be vessels of wrath. In the order of thought, election and reprobation precede the purpose to create and to permit the fall. God creates some to be saved, and others to be lost. This scheme is called supralapsarian because it supposes that men as unfallen, or before the fall, are the objects of election to eternal life, and foreordination to eternal death. . . . . According to the infralapsarian doctrine, God, with the design to reveal his own glory, that is, the perfections of his own nature, determined to create the world; secondly, to permit the fall of man; thirdly, to elect from the mass of fallen men a multitude whom no man could number as 'vessels of mercy'; fourthly, to send his Son for their redemption; and fifthly, to leave the residue of mankind, as he left the fallen angels, to suffer the just punishment of their sins."[3]

[3] Hodge's "Theology." Vol. II., pp. 316, 319.

According to Hagenbach, " . . . . the name Supralapsarians, . . . . does not occur prior to the Synod of Dort." This must be understood as referring to the name *per se*, for from its first introduction the doctrine has had many advocates. It was certainly taught by Calvin and Beza. The remark of Dr. Charles Hodge that in the works of Calvin there are passages favoring both sides of the question, aptly illustrates that which is true of nearly all Calvinists." [4]

Of the intimate friend of Calvin Professor S. M. Hopkins says, "Supralapsarian Calvinism, and an elaborate argument to prove that the civil magistrate is bound to punish heresy with death were the gift Beza presented to the churches of the Netherlands." [5]

The generic distinction between the supralapsarian and infralapsarian doctrine is, that the former asserts and the latter denies that the decree of reprobation is irrespective of man's condition. It is upon this supposed "order of the decrees" that the entire discussion turns. I now propose to show that one of two things must inevitably follow ; namely (1) The infralapsarian scheme is really no solution, and is only a metaphysical subterfuge to escape the "horrible" conclusion of supralapsarianism; or (2) If it is accepted, it logically necessitates the fundamental position of Arminianism. The following points should be carefully considered. (*a*) The extreme modesty of the infralapsarians. They tell us of the exact order of the

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4 See Part II., Chap. IV., Sec. I. and II.

5 "Opening of the Synod of Dort." "Princeton Review," March, 1878, p. 323.

divine decrees. They even number them as "first," "second," and "third." Job's question, "Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?" is no longer unanswerable. All honor to the infralapsarians who remind us of the poet's words,

> "Herein I recognize the high-learned man.
> What you have never handled—no man can."

But pause, I am mistaken. I do them great injustice: for (*b*) There is no order of the decrees. To be sure, Dr. Hodge thinks it is convenient, very convenient to talk as though the divine purposes were successively formed, but he has the frankness to say that such is not the fact. It is simply a human, in fact, an infralapsarian way of speaking without any divine reality; he says, "The decrees of God, therefore, are not many, but one purpose;" again, the decrees are eternal, for this "necessarily follows from the perfection of the divine Being. He can not be supposed to have at one time plans or purposes which he had not at another."[6] If this be true, what is the use of talking of the *order* of the decrees? None whatever, except to hide the defects of the system. (*c*) Is it true that God barely permits the fall of man? Well, let us see what Dr. Hodge will answer. In treating of this subject, our author is in the company of Calvin; that is, his writings contain passages favoring both sides. On one page he will talk as though he held the doctrine of bare permission, while on another page much stronger language will be used: thus he says,

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[6] "Theology." Vol. I., pp. 537, 538.

"Some things he purposes to do, others he decrees to permit to be done." "It may be, and doubtless is, infinitely wise and just in God to permit the occurrence of sin, and to adopt a plan of which sin is a certain consequence or element." Vol. I., pp. 541–7.

"The Scriptures teach that sinful acts, as well as such as are holy, are foreordained." "As the Scriptures teach that the providential control of God extends to all events, even the most minute, they do thereby teach that his decrees are equally comprehensive." Vol. I., p. 543.

But, granting that Dr. Hodge is to be interpreted according to the term "permit," what is the result? If the fall of man was permitted, yet it took place according to his will: if it occurred according to his will, he certainly designed it: if he designed it, he certainly decreed it. This is substantially confessed by Dr. Hodge. "Whatever he does, he certainly purposed to do. Whatever he permits to occur, he certainly purposed to permit." Now what is the difference between the supralapsarian and the infralapsarian? Simply this: one is fearless enough to state his doctrine just as it is; the other hides behind a sophism. Does the reader imagine that my reasoning on this point is fallacious? Take the other horn of the dilemma. Maintain, for one moment that there is an essential difference between the effecting and permitting decrees, and you have denied their unity; hence Calvinism is in ruins. The decrees are but one purpose; whatever is affirmed of one, must be true of all, and consequently the infralapsarian terminology is a distinction without a difference.

That the Arminian doctrine of foreknowledge is logically necessiated by the position of the infralapsarians is easily demonstrated. If God decreed to

permit sin, he certainly foreknew it; otherwise there is no permission: sin occurred without his knowledge. Hence, so far forth, the decrees are subsequent to, and conditioned on foreknowledge, but if one or more decrees are conditional, others may be so, nay, must be so, for are not the decrees one? Thus we reach the ground of the Arminian, who is doubtless thankful to the infralapsarians for their undesigned indorsement.

## SECTION VII.

### *My Position Confirmed by Eminent Calvinists.*

In a previous section the reader has seen the testimony of the infralapsarians concerning the legitimate conclusion of supralapsarianism. He will now have an opportunity to hear the other side, and thus be able to judge for himself as to the merits of both schemes. Before doing so, however, it may be interesting to notice the testimony of some Calvinists who are not pronounced supralapsarians. We have already heard the testimony of Dr. Dabney. With his permission we will recall him: he thinks "both parties are wrong in their method, and the issue is one which should never have been raised." There is "neither supra nor infralapsarian, and no room for their debate."

Dr. Dick is so candid and withal so consistent that the reader will greatly appreciate the following. He is considering the charge of God being the author of sin:

"I acknowledge that this horrible inference seems to be naturally deduced from the supralapsarian scheme." "There is something in this system repugnant to our ideas of the character of God, whom it represents rather as a despot than the Father of the universe." pp. 373, 369.

"But it does not follow from our scheme which supposes sin as the groundwork of predestination." "The term predestination includes the decrees of election and reprobation. Some indeed, confine it to election: but there seems to be no sufficient reason for not extending it to the one as well as the other; as in both, the final condition of man is preappointed, or predestinated. . . . The sublapsarian scheme removes no difficulty, but merely speaks in terms less offensive. It is virtually the same thing to say that God decreed that Adam should fall, and then decreed to save some of his posterity and leave others to perish; as to say that God first decreed to save some and condemn others and then in order to accomplish this design decreed the fall of Adam and the whole human race in him." pp. 373, 360, 361.

Here we have not only diamond cutting diamond, but self arrayed against self. One is led to inquire if Dr. Dick is not attempting a third solution, which shall keep clear of both schemes; the one which represents God "as a despot," and that which "removes no difficulty but merely speaks in terms less offensive." But no, it can not be. It is logically impossible. All Calvinists are supra or infralapsarians, says Dr. Aikman. Moreover, Dr. Dick uses the infralapsarian, or

sublapsarian language, which makes sin the groundwork of the reprobating decree. After such a convincing argument I am prepared for anything, and hence the following confession from our eminently consistent author is in order. "I confess that the statement may be objected to as not complete; that there are still difficulties which press upon us: that perplexing questions may be proposed, and that the answers which have been returned to them by great divines are not so satisfactory in every instance as those imagine who do not think for themselves, and take too much upon trust."

Calvin says, "Many professing a desire to defend the Deity from an invidious charge, admit the doctrine of election but deny that any one is reprobated. This they do ignorantly and childishly, since there could be no election, without its opposite reprobation." Waxing warmer and warmer, the great Reformer says of those who are infralapsarians, "Here they recur to the distinction between will and permission, the object being to prove that the wicked perish only by the permission, but not by the will of God. But why do we say that he permits, but just because he wills? Nor, indeed, is there any probability in the thing itself, viz., that man brought death upon himself, merely by the permission, and not by the ordination of God! As if God had not determined what he wished the condition of the chief of his creatures to be." Of the doctrine that says God merely permitted Pharaoh to be hardened, he calls it a "silly cavil" and maintains, "If to harden means only bare permission, the contumacy will not properly belong to Pharaoh. Now, could anything be more feeble

and insipid than to interpret as if Pharaoh had only allowed himself to be hardened?" [7]

The following from Dr. S. S. Smith is quite important as coming from an honorable president of the College of New Jersey. Of moral evils, he says, "To say that they have been merely permitted, without any interference, or concern of Almighty God in the actions of men, is only attempting, by the illusion of a word, to throw the difficulty out of sight, not to solve it. . . . . The greater part of those writers who are friendly to the system of divine decrees, afraid, at the same time, of seeming to detract from the holiness of God, have, in order to avoid this impious consequence, thought it useful to conceive of the Divine purposes in a certain order, which has, therefore, been styled the *order* of the decrees. Every scheme, however, for arranging them, labors under the same essential defect; that of seeming to represent a succession in the Divine Mind similar to what must necessarily take place in the designs and plans of men. In the purposes of God there can be no succession;" of the sublapsarians he says, "The cautious timidity with which these writers approach this subject betrays their secret apprehension that the decrees of God, to which, on other occasions, they freely appeal, have, in the production of sin, some sinister influence on the moral liberty of man. If these apprehensions are well founded, they ought to abandon their system altogether." [8]

According to Hopkins modern Calvinists are less

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7 "Institutes." B. III., Chap. XXIII., Sec. 1-8. B. I., Chap., XVIII., Sec. 2.

8 "Nat. and Revealed Religion," pp. 271, 277.

consistent than Arminians, and should give up their position. "It has been observed that Calvin and the assembly of divines at Westminster assert that the divine decree and agency respecting the existence of sin imply more than a bare permission, viz., something positive and efficacious. They, therefore, who hold to only a bare permission, do depart from those who have been properly called Calvinists, and do not agree with the Confession of Faith composed by said assembly of divines, or with those numerous churches and divines who do assent or have assented, to that Confession of Faith, in England, Scotland and America." [9]

Rev. Daniel T. Fiske says, "The decrees of God are not merely his purposes to permit events to take place as they do. Some hold that, with regard to the existence of sin, we can only affirm that the divine decrees extend to it in the sense that God determines to permit it, that is, not to prevent it. But this language does not seem to express the whole truth. God might, indeed, be said to decree the existence of whatever he could have prevented, but determined not to prevent. But the decrees of God are not mere negatives. They are purposes to do something and to do that which renders certain the existence of all events, sin included." [1]

Bishop Burnett has so admirably stated the question that I am sure the reader will be pleased at its presentation: he is speaking of the supralapsarians. "Nor can they think 'with the sublapsarians, that reprobation is only God's passing by those whom he

9 "Works." Vol. I., pp. 144, 145.
1 "Bib. Sacra," Vol. XIX., p. 404.

does not elect. This is an act unworthy of God, as if he forgot them, which does clearly imply imperfection. And as for that which is said concerning their being fallen in Adam, they argue, that either Adam's sin and the connection of all mankind to him as their head and representative, was absolutely decreed, or it was not; if it was then all is absolute. Adam's sin and the fall of mankind were decreed, and by consequence, all from the beginning to the end are under a continued chain of absolute decrees: and then the supralapsarian and the sublapsarian hypothesis will be one and the same, only variously expressed.

"But if Adam's sin was only foreseen and permitted, then a conditionate decree founded upon prescience, is once admitted, so that all that follows turns upon it: and then all the arguments either against the perfection of such acts, or the certainty of such prescience, turns against this; for if they are admitted in any one instance, then they may be admitted in others as well as in that." The following is the Bishop's personal opinion: "The sublapsarians do always avoid to answer this; and it seems that they do rather incline to think that Adam was under an absolute decree; and if so, then, though their doctrine may seem to those who do not examine things nicely, to look more plausible; yet really it amounts to the same thing with the other." [2]

This is the legitimate conclusion. Beyond all question, the whole discussion is mere logomachy. It is a distinction without any essential difference: or if the difference is radical, Arminianism is the inevitable conclusion. It is similar to the language employed

[2] "Exposition," p. 212.

to mystify the mind on the Atonement. When the advocates of a limited Atonement were hard pressed by reason and Bible, they invented the subterfuge "Christ died sufficiently or meritoriously for all, but efficaciously only for the elect." So when the doctrine of Reprobation is closely examined and followed to its logical and necessary conclusion, the modern Calvinist retorts, "God does not decree the perdition of the non-elect. He has merely decreed to permit them to sin and perish." When asked to explain the method of this wonderful negative decree, our friend says, "It is because God views them as fallen," thus making the vision of God as narrow as their own; for if God can view men as fallen before they are created, why can not he view them as repentant under the influences of the Spirit? Verily, the question is asked in vain. The Calvinist is silent except when he breaks out with that wonderfully convincing argument, "who art thou that repliest against God?"

## SECTION VIII.

### *God Not Guiltless if He Permits When He Could Prevent* Sin.

The doctrine that God permits sin has been variously understood. As the reader has seen, all consistent Calvinists accept and affirm the bold theory that all sin could have been prevented had it so pleased God. That even now all souls might be converted, all sin immediately stopped, and every trace of wretchedness instantly obliterated. If asked, why are these things permitted? they invariably reply, God has not revealed all the reasons, but we are sure that it must be on account of his honor and glory. Moreover, they

affirm that if this be denied, the omnipotence of God is seriously impaired, and Atheism is the logical conclusion.

The theory of Leibnitz has been variously interpreted.[3] Without doubt, his Théodicée is the ablest theological work which the seventeenth century produced. If it did not satisfactorily solve the problem, it certainly started the mind in the right direction; his theory of the "privative nature of evil" is now quite generally regarded as inadequate. Sin is more than a negation. Our consciousness can not thus be denied. From his assertions of the limitations of the creature, some have deduced the doctrine that evil is necessary. Others deny this and assert that he simply meant "that the possibility of evil inheres in the very nature of things." McCosh thinks that "it can not be so stated as not to involve this mystery, that God should select a system in which evil is allowed that good may come."

I am inclined to think that this is a just criticism upon Leibnitz, for unless he uses the word permit ambiguously he certainly fails to show why sin is not the means of good: the preface to his work contains the following: "We show that evil has another source than the will of God; and that we have reason to say of moral evil, that God only permits it, and that he does not will it. But what is more important, we show that God can not only permit sin, but even concur therein, and contribute to it, without prejudice to his holiness, although absolutely speaking, he might have prevented it."

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3 See Cook's "Transcendentalism," p. 188. McCosh's "Divine Government," p. 377; note Hodge's "Theology," Vol. II., p. 134.

It is to be regretted that so great a thinker as Leibnitz did not see that if God,—"absolutely speaking"—permitted that which he might have prevented, he must have preferred its existence to its non-existence, and consequently did really will its existence. It seems to me there are but two suppositions to be considered. Either God could have prevented sin, but did not, or he wished to, but could not. The first affirmation is accepted by all consistent Calvinists. The second is adopted and more or less clearly defended by Arminians.

The reader has already seen some of the consequences which legitimately follow the Calvinistic doctrine that God can, but does not prevent sin. In the present section I am to show that if this dictum be true, God can not be guiltless. Sin is pronounced to be wrong both by God and man. So far as any wrong is permitted by any person having full power and authority to prevent, so far is that person morally guilty. This is true of man, and I reverently affirm it to be of universal application. The highest legal opinion of all nations asserts the principle as true in private and public life, in peace as well as war. The conscience and intellectual conviction of every man will instantly accept it. Men act upon it in every-day life and consequently to deny its force in theology is mere assumption.

At this point, however, it is necessary to consider the meaning of the term "permit." In popular language Arminians sometimes speak of the permission of sin, as though they held the Calvinistic doctrine. The term is unfortunate and should never be used outside of the Calvinistic system. To permit a thing to

occur necessarily implies power to prevent; if the event can not be prevented, because of something connected with it, then it can not be permitted. The something which is beyond prevention is, or is not indissolubly connected with the event: if it is so connected, then the power to prevent must embrace, not merely the event by itself, but the event as associated with that which is not preventable: this would be equivalent to saying that the event is not permitted because not preventable. On the other hand, if the non-preventable something is not indissolubly connected with the event, the event, in and of itself, is preventable, and hence is really permitted. Moreover, to permit denotes something "positive, a decided assent, either directly or by implication."

Consequently all questions relating to the permission of sin arising from the creation of man are decidedly out of place. Calvinists have asserted, and at times Arminians have rather implied the same, Why, surely God permitted sin because he created man; or God permits sin because he could deprive the race of life, or in any case of individual sinning he could force the soul by a flash of lightning, or by some other means equally effective.

These questions I repeat, have no place in this discussion. They confound all proper distinctions and cover the hideous features of Calvinism. Beyond all doubt God is free in all his actions. He was under no necessity in the work of creation. He could have made a different world, and different beings to inhabit it. But preferring a race of free agents with the possibility—and to him the actuality—of sin, rather than a lower order of creatures, he created man. In this

sense, it is true, sin is permitted because man was created. But this is not the problem before us; for if God could have prevented sin only by refraining from creating man in his present freedom, then as I have previously said, it is irrelevant to say that God could, but did not prevent sin. With that understanding of the subject the question would be, Why did God create man a free moral agent? It is evident, therefore, that when the question of the prevention or the non-prevention of sin is considered, it has reference to man as he was created, the Calvinist asserting and the Arminian denying that God could have prevented all sin in the present moral system without violating the creature's freedom.

Notice (1) That Calvinists concede this is the question at issue. The following is from the "Auburn Declaration." "God permitted the introduction of sin, not because he was unable to prevent it consistently with the moral freedom of his creatures, but for wise and benevolent reasons which he has not revealed."

Dr. Geo. Duffield says, "The Old School have charged the New with believing that God could have prevented the existence of sin in the world, but not without destroying the freedom of the human will; and that sin is incidental to any moral system. To this the latter reply, that God permitted the entrance of sin, but not because he was unable to prevent it; but for wise and benevolent reasons which he hath not revealed." (2) Calvinists ridicule the idea that God could have prevented sin only by creating man less free. President Jeremiah Day says, "Will it be said that God merely permitted their hearts to be hardened;

or permitted them to harden their own hearts? If this be conceded, it must still be understood, that he had power to prevent this result. What sort of permission is a mere inability to prevent that which is permitted?"

Dr. Griffin thus speaks against the supposition of Dr. N. W. Taylor. "Permit sin! And how could he prevent it? In no way but by refusing to create moral agents. As well might you talk of my permitting the cholera, because I do not kill off everybody that could have it. Why dress up palpable Arminianism in such Calvinistic drapery?" Dr. E. A. Lawrence is equally explicit: he says, "God is possessed of adequate power to have prevented sin, if he had chosen to do so. The idea of permission implies the power of prevention. It would be preposterous to speak of God's permitting what he was not able to prevent; and we hold it to be equally peculiar to speak of God's permitting sin in a moral system; if he had no other way of preventing it, than by preventing the moral system; as the watchmaker can prevent friction in the wear of a watch, only by not making the watch."[4]

[4] Strange that President Edwards could not see this distinction. The following extract from his defense of Decrees and Election clearly shows how he confounded the Arminian with the Calvinistic position. "But you will say, God wills to permit sin, as he wills the creature should be left to his freedom; and if he should hinder it, he would offer violence to the nature of his own creature. I answer, this comes nevertheless to the very thing that I say. You say, God does not will sin absolutely; but rather than alter the law of nature and the nature of free agents, he wills it. He wills what is contrary to excellency in some particulars, for the sake of a more general excellency and order. So that this scheme of the Arminians does not help the matter." "Works." Vol. II., p. 516. As we have seen, this confounds all proper distinctions. The Arminian says, God desires, and works for the utter extinction of sin. The Calvinist says, God desires and secures the actual amount of sin. Yet Edwards sees no difference.

(3) My position more or less clearly conceded and affirmed by Calvinists. Dr. Albert Barnes is generally regarded as having been a good Presbyterian Calvinist; here are his words concerning God's disapprobation of sin. "It would not be right for him not to show it, for that would be the same thing as to be indifferent to it, or to approve it;" speaking of "the wrath of God" (Rom. i. 28) he says: "We admire the character of a ruler who is opposed to all crime in the community, and who expresses those feelings in the laws. And the more he is opposed to vice and crime, the more we admire his character and his laws; and why shall we be not equally pleased with God who is opposed to all crime in all parts of the universe." Dr. G. F. Wright has said Finney was "distinctively Calvinistic." Here are his words, "Certainly if he was able wisely to prevent sin in any case where it actually occurs, then not to do so nullifies all our conceptions of his goodness and wisdom. He would be the greatest sinner in the universe if, with power and wisdom adequate to the prevention of sin, he had failed to prevent it."[5] Dr. L. P. Hickok was not given to idle speculations, nor did he speak without due consideration. His testimony, therefore, is especially important. "Theologically, no body of divinity can be sound which has running through it the doctrine that God wishes his creatures to sin, and works in or upon them to induce it. . . . . Somehow, sin has come into God's system of government against his authority; and its continuance, as well as its origin, leaves the sin to be abominable in his sight: and it can not consist with this that he wishes for it

5 "Gospel Themes," p. 218.

and works to secure it. All theorizing or teaching subversive of this truth, or obscuring its clearness, should be rejected without ceremony or apology, no matter how ingenious the speculation or earnest the teaching may be." [6]

Thus do I show the logical result of the doctrine that God can, but does not prevent sin. Permission implies not only power to prevent, but also assent. He who permits evil is so far a *particeps criminis* to the transaction.

## SECTION IX.

### *Some Objections Considered.*

I. It may be objected that my position degrades God. If his omnipotence is limited, he can not be perfect. This is true only of the Calvinist's conception of God. If he is determined to define omnipotence as the power of God which can do anything, he has that privilege: but in that case it is the God of Calvinism, and not of the Bible, who is degraded. True, the Saviour, said "With God all things are possible"; but the literal interpretation is confined to Calvinism and Universalism. Even Charnock has said "The object of his absolute power is all things possible: such things that imply not a contradiction, such that are not repugnant in their own nature to be done, and such as are not contrary to the nature and perfections of God to be done." [7] Accepting this definition of the divine omnipotence I merely disagree with the Calvinist concerning what things do imply a contradiction,

[6] "Bib. Sacra," 1873, pp. 667, 668.

[7] "Attributes of God," p. 401.

what things are "repugnant in their own nature," and also what things are "contrary to the nature and perfection of God." I respectfully submit the question if sin is not repugnant in its own nature, and as such, is it "not contrary to the nature and perfection of God"? Moreover, the objection is fallacious. Whatever limitation there is was self-imposed. God could have refrained from creating. He might have created a race with a much lower degree of freedom, and so far, his power would have remained unlimited. Hence, whatever force the objection has, directly applies to the plan which God adopted. If the Deity chooses "for wise and benevolent reasons" to place himself under such limitations, I do not know as the Calvinist has any reason to object. In the light of this thought the following quotation from Professor Henry Cowles will prove interesting: Having considered the limitations under which the Holy Spirit works, he says, "Thus it appears that we must essentially modify the very common assumption that God has permitted sin in his moral universe, having infinite power to prevent it. This assumption—'infinite power to prevent'—has begotten the main difficulties of the sin problem. The sensitiveness of many good men touching this whole question hinges around this point. It seems to them derogatory to the infinite God to admit any sort of limitation to his power as against sin and as towards its prevention, or the recovery of sinners from its dominion. To all such sensitive thinking and feeling, let it be suggested that it is in no sense derogatory to God's power to say that he can not save sinners of our race without an atonement, can not save them without their personal faith

in the atoning Redeemer, can not save them without their repentance. Such a 'can not' should startle no one; should never be thought of as involving any dishonorable limitations of God's power. Indeed, such limitations in God's plans and principles as to human salvation are to his infinite glory. Nor is it any impeachment of God's power, or of his moral character in any respect, that he should recognize the nature of intelligent, free, and morally acting minds, and adapt his agencies upon them accordingly. . . . . With profoundest reverence, it behooves us to assume that God's wisdom in managing this whole moral system is simply perfect. Never let us derogate from his wisdom or from his love. The Scriptures represent the Most High as being keenly sensitive to the least imputation against his justice, his wisdom or his love. (See Ezek. xviii. 2, 3, 23, 32; xxxiii. 10, 11, 17, 20). No similar sensitiveness appears in his word on the point of limitations in the line of actually saving sinners. There seems to be never a thought of its being derogatory to God's power to say, 'It is impossible to renew them again to repentance,' or to say that sinners whom he labors and longs to save, yet will resist his Spirit and forever die."[8]

Throughout this discussion I have tried to present the plain teachings of the Word. Beyond all successful contradiction the Scriptures contain many declarations concerning the limitations of God's grace. Let the Calvinist talk as he will, God declares that his grace was limited by the perverseness of his ancient people. "And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my

[8] "Bib Sacra," 1873, pp. 742–744.

vineyard. What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?" (Isa. v. 3, 4.)

If the reader will compare this statement with the record of Jesus weeping over Jerusalem, or with the words of the Master, "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life," he will see that the Calvinist is over zealous. Lastly, the objection comes with poor grace from the Calvinist. Of all men, he should be the last to find fault with the Arminian doctrine of omnipotence. Degrade the Divine Omnipotence? And pray tell me what does he do? One would think that the Power of God was of more consequence than the Divine Veracity or Justice. When the Calvinist shall have vindicated his theory against the charge of making God the author of sin, the punisher of men against whom there is no breath of evil, and the proclaimer of one thing and the doer of another, then he may say with some degree of fairness that this position degrades the divine omnipotence.

II. It may be objected that inasmuch as God knew that sin would invade his moral government, he must have preferred sin to the non creation of man with his actual freedom. If this be true, the objector may urge, then on your own confession, God is the author of sin, for he created man with the full knowledge that sin would occur, which might have been prevented by the non-creation of the race. This is the same idea which I noticed at the commencement of this section. It changes the entire argument. Instead of solving the problem of the prevention or non-prevention of sin, in and of itself, it seeks to know why God created man

whom he could not prevent from sinning. It is an entire abandonment of the Calvinistic doctrine that God could, but did not wish to prevent sin in the present moral system. With this understanding of the subject, I have no objection against answering the question.

We do not know all the reasons why the Deity preferred to create a race of free creatures with the (pure) certainty that sin would result, rather than to refrain from creating, or to create a lower order of free creatures. That he has done so, is to me a fact beyond all successful questioning: hence it must have been for the best. But if reasons are sought, the following suppositions are, to me, more than probable.

(1) The moral government of God does not demand perfection. That of course, should be its aim, but if it can not be secured, it does not follow that the attempt should be abandoned. If, on the whole, more good can be secured by such a government than by no government, even human reason justifies the attempt. This is the case with the present moral system. The Divine Mind sees the end from the beginning. He knows that notwithstanding the sin which can not be prevented, the ultimate amount of good will far exceed the ultimate amount of evil, and hence it is better to have created, than to have refrained from creating.

(2) In the light of this remark it is easy to see the probable reason why God created the race with so large a degree of freedom. A low degree of creatural freedom necessarily means a low degree of creatural righteousness. Rightness or holiness can not be created. It is a matter of choice. He who has been created perfectly symmetrical, every faculty in proper

relation, or adjustment with every other faculty, every passion, every inclination directed toward that which is true, beautiful and good, is not righteous in the proper acceptation of the term. That which he is reflects the goodness and wisdom of his Maker: he may be admired for what he is, but he can not be virtuous until he deliberately chooses his Creator's will as his own: consequently if the creature has little responsibitity he can not acquire much virtue. The larger the freedom, therefore, the greater are the heights of nobility to which the soul may aspire: hence the Divine Love is more highly honored by the worship of creatures of exalted intelligence than by those whose freedom is only a little above the brute creation. The following from Dr. Dorner is admirable: "We must judge, therefore, that the divine omnipotence by the mightiness of its working brings into existence free beings capable of resisting its will; because, unless they are able freely to resist, they will not be able freely to surrender themselves, and unless they freely surrender themselves, they can not be regarded by God as a new and valuable good. If we acknowledge this to be the nature of the freedom conferred on man, and assume that God designs to establish a free, ethical cosmos, a cosmos of love, a divine family; we must also concede the necessity of his entering into a relation of reciprocity to man, for love without reciprocity does not deserve the name."

Again, he says, "By creating man a free, that he might be a moral, being, God has brought into existence a being, in a certain sense of like nature with himself, which as such is capable of resisting him. Such resistance can never be overcome by mere force.

Indeed, God would contradict himself were he to attempt a compulsory vanquishment of human opposition. Having made man free, he must suffer him to use his freedom, even when the use is abuse. He may annihilate him ; but he can not will his existence as free whilst annihilating his freedom. This is the secret of our immense responsibility for the use of freedom. Here is the root of the sense of guilt." [9] Dr. Samuel D. Cochran says, " God's design in constituting them was not that they should sin, and suffer either the natural or the retributory consequence of so doing, but that they should obey his law and experience the blessed consequences, both natural and remuneratory, of so doing." [1]

In this connection it is proper to notice the statement of Dr. McCabe that " No consideration whatever could justify infinite goodness in creating a soul that God foreknew would be wretched and suffer forever." Unless Dr. McCabe adopts the doctrine of Creationism he needs to be reminded that souls are created through the complex workings of natural laws. If God should adopt and consistently follow Dr. McCabe's postulate, human freedom would be seriously impaired. If, as he grants, God " could not consistently have created a race of free moral beings such as man " without providing a Saviour, sin as a contingent fact must have been foreseen. Such a divine foresight justifies us in believing that God has not fundamentally erred in his estimate of the abuse of freedom which leads to eternal ruin. III. It is more than merely supposable that the present moral system is the

9 " Bib. Sac.," 1879, pp. 54, 55.

1 " The Moral System and the Atonement."

first of a series. If this be so, it is reasonable to infer that the history of our race, its fall, the Incarnation and Atonement, will be used as great moral motives to maintain the purity of future systems.[2] Viewed in this light the difficulties pertaining to the subject are considerably decreased. The attempt of God which now looks like a failure may terminate in triumph. If the Calvinist seeks to vindicate his position by indefinitely postponing the solution, he certainly can not complain if his opponent adopts the same method. The radical difference between the two solutions is at once apparent. Nor is this position at all novel. Dr. Bellamy asks, "How know we if God thinks it best to have a larger number of intelligences to behold his glory and to be happy with him, but that he judges it best not to bring them into existence till the present grand drama shall be finished at the day of judgment? That they may, without sharing the hazard of the present confused state of things, reap the benefit of the whole through eternal ages; whilst angels and saints may be appointed their instructors to lead into the knowledge of God's ways to his creatures, and of all their ways to him from the time of Satan's revolt in heaven to the final consummation of all things. And as the Jewish dispensation was introductory and preparatory to the Christian, so this present universe may be introductory and preparatory to one after the day of judgment, almost infinitely larger." [3]

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[2] For an interesting discussion of the question of a plurality of inhabited worlds, see Townsend's "The Arena and The Throne." Also Bib. Sac., 1873, p. 758.

[3] As quoted in "Law and Penalty Endless." See also Beecher's "Conflict of Ages."

## CHAPTER II.

### Calvinism Contradicts Conscience.

"Foreordination of some men to everlasting life, and of others to everlasting death, and preterition of all the non-elect (including the whole heathen world), are equally inconsistent with a proper conception of divine justice, and pervert it into an arbitrary partiality for a small circle of the elect, and an arbitrary neglect of the great mass of men."—*Rev. Philip Schaff, D. D.*

## CHAPTER II.

### Calvinism Contradicts Conscience.

Sin exists. This is as God desires, for, being omnipotent, he doeth all things according to his will. Such is the logic of Calvinism. Its language is equally explicit. Sin seems to be one of the corner-stones of the system. If this assertion is considered too strong by the average reader, he will please recall a few of the many Calvinistic gems which have been polished by the master workmen.

Bates says, sin was permitted by God "as a fit occasion for the more glorious discovery of his attributes." The learned Charnock affirms that "God willed sin, that is, he willed to permit it, that he might communicate himself to the creature in the most excellent manner." Toplady says God permitted the fall of "our first parents . . . . . having purposed to order it to his own glory." Hopkins declares that "sin and misery . . . . . are necessary in the best system to accomplish the greatest good, the most important and best ends." Dr. Alexander says sin was permitted in crder "that God might have an opportunity of manifesting his own glory to all intelligent creatures more conspicuously." Edwards has the following, "We little consider how much the sense of good is heightened by the sense of evil, both moral and natural. As it is necessary that there should be

evil, because the display of the glory of God could not but be imperfect and incomplete without it, so evil is necessary in order to the highest happiness of the creature, and the completeness of that communication of God, for which he made the world." [1]

Dr. Hodge declares that sin is permitted because "higher ends will be accomplished by its admission than by its exclusion." [2]

It is not necessary to adduce further proof. It is incontestably certain that Calvinists have always made much of sin : have always regarded it as the means by which God reveals his glory to the world. Is that glory worthy of the adoration of the universe? In that same proportion is the importance of sin : for as Toplady says, "Without creation no creatures, without creatures, no sin."

I shall now attempt to show that these affirmations are unequivocally condemned by the fundamental utterances of conscience.

## SECTION I.

### *Calvinism Denies the Truthfulness of Remorse.*

Wishing to confront Calvinism with the real utterances of man's moral nature I shall submit the following incident—similar ones are constantly occurring—which took place at the Illinois State Prison, Joliet, August 7, 1883. A convict named George Kellogg "was employed on the Ashley & Company wire con-

1 "Works," Vol. II., p. 517.
2 "Theology," Vol. I., p. 547.

tract, and ran one of the machines for drawing wire into smaller sizes. The machine revolves at a high rate of speed, and draws the wire with great force. Kellogg picked up one of the loops from the coil of wire that he was feeding and tossing it over his neck was drawn down to the block instantly with terrible force. The convict who was at the machine next to him, and to whom he had said good-by, stopped the machine as quickly as possible, but the wire was imbedded far into the flesh around the suicide's neck and had to be filed off. . . . . Just before committing the act, he went to his keeper and told him that he wanted to see the warden, and being told that he was absent, replied, 'Well, I wanted to make a confession to him. I am the man that committed the double murder at Atlanta, Ill.,' and turning, he walked back to his machine and threw the fatal coil about his neck. . . . . In his cell he left an ante-mortem statement addressed to Chaplain Rutledge, saying, 'I have been treated well in the prison. I have no malice toward any one. I am innocent of the robbery that I am sent here for, but it is something else that worries me. I was raised a Methodist, but what am I now? I am nothing. My God, forgive me, and be merciful to me. It is more than I have been to myself.' "

Doubtless, this man's sin constantly troubled him: he became less composed and easily frightened. More than ever he saw the enormity of the sin, and hence the sense of his guilt was constantly increasing. Ah! wretched man; "thou art in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity." Remorse is at work. Thou art now before the judgment seat of the Almighty

forever condemned for doing that which is an eternal wrong.[3]

But what is remorse, and what does it say? Remorse is the lash of conscience. It is the sting of conscious guilt. It is self-loathing. It makes what Byron calls "a hell in man." Its language is too plain to be misunderstood. It says to the soul, "Thou art guilty." The man may deny it before his fellows, but to himself, he says, "True, true, for I did it." While remorse can never touch the innocent, it is a constant companion of the guilty. This has been vividly portrayed by Shakespeare in Richard III.:

"O coward conscience, how dost thou afflict me!
The lights burn blue.—It is now dead midnight.
Cold, fearful drops stand on my trembling flesh.
What do I fear? Myself? There's none else by!
Richard loves Richard; that is, I am I.
Then fly. What, from myself? Great reason; why?
Lest I revenge. What! myself upon myself?
I love myself. Wherefore? for any good
That I myself have done unto myself?
O, no: alas! I rather hate myself
For hateful deeds committed by myself."

But remorse is not simply the pronouncement of guilt. By no means. Guilt necessarily presupposes that the deed done, against which the conscience pronounces its judgment, was intrinsically sinful. Hence remorse says, This evil deed ought not to have been committed. On this point there can not be a shadow

[3] "The secret which the murderer possesses soon comes to possess him; and, like the evil spirit of which we read, it overcomes him, and leads him whithersoever it will. He feels it beating at his heart, rising to his throat, and demanding disclosure. He thinks the whole world sees it in his face, reads it in his eyes, and almost hears its workings in the very silence of his thoughts. It has become his master. It betrays his discretion, it breaks down his courage, it conquers his prudence."—*Webster.*

of doubt. Remorse is meaningless, nay, it is a psychological delusion, if it does not signify that the deed for which the soul is tortured, should never have been committed. Rev. Joseph Cook in speaking of the bliss or the pain which inevitably results from doing right or wrong, and which is "capable of being at its height, the acutest known to the soul," says that the former arises "when what ought to be has been done, and the latter when what ought not." [4]

But this brings us face to face with Calvinism. Of a given sin, the soul under the remorse of conscience says, I ought not to have done it. Calvinism answers, Nay, you ought. That which you have done, was decreed, was permitted by God for his glory. He permits nothing without design. Sin is the necessary means of displaying the Divine glory: hence your sin was included, and is as God desired, for having all power he will certainly secure his desires.

Now if the reader is disposed to be indignant, I respectfully request him to direct his indignation against, not the writer, but the system under examination. In previous pages I have carefully quoted the exact language of eminent Calvinists. I have not interpreted them according to my ideas, but have allowed them to speak for themselves. I kindly insist that the reader shall do the same. No excuse of the reader, no evasion of the Calvinist will be permitted. The issue has been clearly and fairly made, and the verdict must be according to the principles of fairness. Unless Calvinists write according to the teachings of Machiavel, they must mean what they say. Such being the actual fact, they must here suffer a crushing

[4] Lect. "Unexplored Remainders in Conscience."

defeat. Can there be a palliative excuse? None whatever. The decrees relate to all events: these decrees are one purpose: all things are thus decreed, and take place as God wills. This is the logic of Calvinism. Now for a few more quotations. Dr. Timothy Dwight says, "All things, both beings and events, exist in exact accordance with the purposes, pleasure, or what is commonly called, The Decrees of God." Hopkins says, "There can nothing take place under the care and government of an infinitely powerful, wise and good Being that is not on the whole wisest and best." Dr. Charles Hodge says, "If, therefore, sin occurs, it was God's design that it should occur." The following was taught the author in a certain orthodox Congregational Theological Seminary. For clearness and consistency these points equal those of Calvin. They are entitled "God's connection with Sin. (1) He forbids it. (2) He hates it. (3) Punishes those guilty of it. (4) Earnestly desires that men shall not be guilty of it. (5) He decrees sin. (6) He so constitutes and circumstances men that they certainly will sin. (7) He makes sin the means by which he exhibits his own perfections in their most glorious display. (8) God displays His glory through the pardon of sin and the salvation of the sinner. (9) For aught we know this moral system in which we live answers the end of manifesting God's declarative glory through the free agency of his creatures, as completely as any system that could be devised."

Certainly, these, together with the previous quotations, are sufficient to convince even the most incredulous that as a theological system Calvinism demands

the existence of sin. Remorse, on the contrary, affirms that sin ought not to be.[5]

## SECTION II.

### *Calvinism Contradicts the Ought of Conscience.*

Remorse is the last stage in the analysis of conscience. I examined it first because of its clear and unimpeachable testimony. It speaks in no uncertain sound, and its language is the same the world over. "No king can look it out of countenance, or warrior conquer it. How accurately and impartially it judges! It masters completely the man of guilt, holding him down, grinding him down, overawing and overwhelming him."[6]

Had I merely said that conscience condemns Calvinism, the friends of the system might have replied, That is a matter of individual experience. It is the fault of your conscience, not of the system. This however can not be maintained. Remorse is of universal application. That which it always condemns is fundamentally wrong. It unequivocally and forever affirms that sin ought not to be. We will now turn our attention to the second step in this moral analysis.

Calvinism affirms that the glory of God demands the existence of sin. Says Hodge, "Sin, therefore, according to the Scriptures, is permitted, that the justice of God may be known in its punishment and his

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5 "Is sin permitted as a dragooning process, to eventuate in good at last? No: for then sin ought to be; and conscience affirms that it ought not to be. Is sin the necessary means of the greatest good? No: for the same reason." Cook's "Transcendentalism." p. 184.

6 Townsend's "Credo."

grace in its forgiveness. And the universe, without the knowledge of these attributes, would be like the earth without the light of the sun." [7]

Dr. Griffin says, "Had there been no sin the universe would have lost all the glorious results of redemption, which, as we have seen, was the great end for which God built the universe;" again he says, "Without sin and the work of redemption, all the displays of God which belong to the present universe would have been lost." [8]

But what says conscience? This is the crucial question, and I, for one, am perfectly willing to abide by its decision. Beyond all controversy, conscience has to do with the rightness or wrongness of motives. Of the acts of two persons conscience affirms that those of the first were right, and those of the second wrong, because the motives or intentions were right or wrong. Again, it is equally clear that of these given motives, conscience affirms that the first class ought to have been executed, while of the second class it no less emphatically declares the contrary.

The ought of conscience is imperative. It commands every person to do the right. Of a certain act it says with no faltering tone, This is your duty: you must do it. As Kant has eloquently said, "Duty! thou great, sublime name! thou dost not insinuate thyself by offering the pleasing and the popular, but thou requirest obedience." The ought of conscience outweighs all other considerations. If men would only allow its mandates an impartial hearing, and then act accordingly the desert would indeed blossom as

7 "Theology," Vol. I., p. 435.
8 "Divine Efficiency," p. 195.

the rose. The dreams of the ages would be more than realized under the universal reign of the Prince of Peace.

The ought of conscience imperatively demands the performance of the right: hence the universal obligation to do right: consequently, if all men were to meet this obligation, if all men were to fulfill this righteous requirement, there could be no sin. But the non-existence of sin necessarily means the abridgment of the Divine glory according to the Calvinistic idea of glory. Therefore, conscience is directly at war with its Maker. Calvinism affirms that God's glory and honor are greatly enhanced by the existence of sin. Conscience, on the contrary, would rob God of this glory and honor by imperatively commanding all men to do that which would make sin an impossibility. What is the matter? Are we to understand that God says one thing on the fleshly tables of the heart, which he fundamentally contradicts in his written revelation? Are we to believe that God cares more for display than or a meek and holy heart, a pure and a contrite spirit? Let Calvinists say this if they so think, but I am of the opinion that all such reasoning which necessitates these questions dishonors him, "the high and lofty One who inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy," and who has said "I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." No: the trouble is not with the Bible, nor with man's moral nature, for when rightly interpreted they substantially agree. The difficulty is with the system of theology which we are examining. Calvinists have sought to vindicate the

ways of God. Forgetting that the Divine Being is infinite in wisdom, and therefore will provide legitimate ways of manifesting his glory, they have postulated the absurd doctrine that he permitted, decreed, and therefore really desired the existence of sin, to its non-existence. Against this, I cheerfully put the ought of conscience, firmly believing that it will outweigh by ten thousand times all of the Calvinistic literature of the ages.

At this point it may be profitable to consider a few of the passages of Scripture which it is claimed, teach the general doctrine that God does permit, and therefore decree the existence of sin for the manifestation of his glory. The following texts are adduced to support the theory, viz.: Gen. xlv. 7, 8; Prov. xvi. 4, Isa. x. 5–19; Luke xxii. 22; John x. 18; Acts ii. 23, iv. 27, 28; Col. i. 16, with John i. 3.[9]

The principle involved in most of these passages has been fully discussed in previous pages. As a wise Sovereign, God sees the end from the beginning. This is so, not only because he knows his own plans, but also because he foresees the free actions of men. He therefore restrains the wickedness of men so far as it is possible, and guides, or overrules the rest unto the furtherance of his holy purposes. This is the Arminian's position, and consequently he is a firm believer in Divine Sovereignty, provided the doctrine is properly understood and carefully guarded against Calvinistic encroachments.[1]

There are three passages in the above list which seem to demand an additional examination, viz.,

[9] Taken from Griffin's "Divine Efficiency," p. 195.

[1] See Chap. V. Part II.

Prov. xvi. 4; Col. i. 16 and John i. 3. John and Paul agree in asserting that all things were made by the eternal Word, while the latter asserts that all things were created for him. But what have these passages to do with the subject under discussion? Nothing whatever. The thought of sin, or of *wicked creatures as such*, did not enter into the scope of the apostles, and consequently the interpreter must not put it there. This is evident at a glance, for, reverse the process; take the words "all things" in the widest meaning, in the most literal sense, and you can not escape the conclusion that the Logos is the author of sin. That Dr. Griffin should have appealed to these texts for support clearly illustrates the way in which not a few of our eminent fathers interpreted the Bible. The other passage (Prov. xvi. 4) reads, "The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." Shall this be literally interpreted? Manifestly not; the conclusion is too dreadful even for the infralapsarian Calvinists. If God hath made the wicked *for* the day of evil in the sense now understood, then the supralapsarians are right, and therefore men are condemned as innocent. But says Dr. A. A. Hodge, "This appears to be inconsistent with the divine righteousness, as well as with the teaching of Scripture." Very well, then, let us agree that the words were not intended to teach that which would necessarily follow if they were interpreted according to our Occidental ideas. What then do they teach? As this is one of the proof-texts of the Calvinists, I propose to step aside and allow those to speak whose testimony is especially important. The following is from Professor Cowles, who

says, "It is doubly important to understand this proverb. (1) Because it does teach a great truth; (2) Because it does not teach a certain great error which has been sometimes imputed to it. The word 'made' can not be restricted to creative work, but legitimately includes all the doings of God—works of providence more specifically than works of creation. The Lord works all things in the sense of shaping events and determining issues with special reference to retribution for moral good or evil done by his moral subjects. The original word rendered 'for himself' admits of another construction with this sense: The Lord works everything for its own *purpose*, *i. e.*, he makes results and issues correspond to the human agencies involved in them. He makes the final result of every earthly life correspond to what that life has been. . . . . The sense of the proverb therefore is that simply in accordance with the great eternal law of fitness. God brings upon the wicked the destiny of suffering. There is a just and righteous correspondence between the moral activities of his creatures and the reward which a just God will bestow therefor. . . . . Unfortunately this proverb has sometimes been tortured to say that God has created the wicked for the sake of punishing them, *i. e.*, in order to secure the good results of it in his moral universe. This doctrine has been made specially objectionable by associating it with a practical denial of free moral agency, by assuming that, to accomplish his ends in creating sinners for perdition, God holds them to a life of sinning by a law of necessity which they can not break.

"Nothing can be wider from the truth than this, or more repugnant to every sentiment of benevolence or

even of justice. . . . . We need to distinguish broadly between God's supposed creating of sinners in order that they may sin, that so he may damn them for the good to come from it: and on the other hand, his actually creating them that they might be obedient and so be blest, and then punishing them only because they *will not* obey him, but will perversely scorn their Maker, disown his authority, abuse his love, and set at naught all his efforts to reclaim and save them. Our proverb affirms that in this sense God shapes the destiny of the wicked to their just doom of suffering. When they absolutely *will* consecrate themselves to sinning and to rebellion, the only use God can make of them is to give them their just doom of woe, and make them an example to his moral universe."

In Lange's Commentary the passage is translated as follows:

"Jehovah hath made everything for its end, even the wicked for the day of evil."

This is much clearer than the common rendering, and substantially agrees with Cowles. From the Exegetical Notes I quote the following. "Vs. 4–9, God's wise and righteous administration in respect to the rewarding of good and the punishment of evil. . . . . Even the wicked for the day of evil, *i. e.*, to experience the day of evil, and then to receive his well-merited punishment. It is not specifically the day of final judgment that is directly intended (as though the doctrine here were that of a predestination of the ungodly to eternal damnation, as many of the older Reformed interpreters held), but any day of calamity whatsoever, which God has fixed for the ungodly, whether it may overtake him in this or in the future life."

Dr. Chas. A. Aiken, the American Editor says, "An absolute divine purpose and control in the creation and administration of the world is clearly announced, and also the strength of the bond that joins sin and misery."

Doubtless the reader perceives that the claim of the Calvinist is not sustained by any of these supposed proof-texts, and therefore there is no ground for the supposition that the ought of conscience is contradicted by the Scriptures. On the contrary they substantially agree in affirming that sin ought not to be, and consequently it can not be true that God desires it for the manifestation of his glory.

## SECTION III.

### *In Denying the Ought of Conscience, Calvinism Contradicts the Divine Law.*

This section involves a discussion of the important question, What is the source, or, What is the authority of conscience? It is quite universally admitted that conscience is that power of the mind which recognizes moral judgments. As the will is the soul choosing, so conscience is the soul affirming the rightness or wrongness in motives.

It is also generally conceded that conscience is susceptible of development. To a certain extent the affirmations of conscience depend upon the individual's temperament, moral susceptibility, early education and present environments; hence, the different judgments concerning the same act which are often expressed by those of the same community. As a rule, however, it may be said that these diversities belong to the less important duties, although at times they may relate to

the fundamental obligations. Says Haven, "As to the great essential principles of morals, men, after all, do judge much alike in different ages and different countries. In details they differ; in general principles they agree." [2]

Again: Conscience is not an infallible guide. It is not above error, and consequently it is possible for men to do wrong conscientiously. In such circumstances, however, they are not guiltless, for the simple reason they ought to have known better. That is, while they are right in following their conscience—for to disobey is sin—yet they are wrong in not having a more enlightened conscience. On the other hand, it may, perhaps, be granted that conscience is infallible according to its opportunities. That it impartially judges according to the data furnished: that according to its light, its decision is true.[3]

These modifying thoughts clearly understood, we are prepared to answer the question, What is the authority of conscience? Beyond all legitimate doubt conscience is the law of God by which he seeks to govern his moral creatures. The mandate of conscience is, therefore, the authority of the Creator. What conscience says is what God affirms. On no other supposition can the majesty of conscience be explained. We instinctively feel that the voice within us agrees with our Father's voice; that the ought which outweights all human considerations must have the hearty sanction of him who is "of purer eyes than to behold evil."

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2 "Studies in Philosophy and Theology," p. 165.

3 Probably in this sense we are to understand the words of Kant—"An erring conscience is a chimera."

This is so evident that it is almost, if not quite universally conceded. A few quotations from eminent scholars will suffice to show the reader that I have not spoken at random. McCosh says, "The conscience declares that there is an indelible distinction between good and evil, and conducts by an easy process to the conviction, that God approves the good and hates the evil. The moral power points to a law, holy, just and good, a law which all men have broken, and which no nation shut out from supernatural light, and no pagan philosophy, have ever exhibited in its purity." [4]

Christlieb says, "Now conscience is confessedly that consciousness which testifies to the law of God implanted in us; that moral faculty whereby man discerns with inward certainty what is right and what is wrong in the sight of God (Rom i. 32), and is conscious that the eye of God is turned upon him." [5]

The following is from Delitzsch: "Conscience, therefore, is not an echo or abode of an immediate divine self-attestation, but an active consciousness of a divine law established in man's heart; for all self-consciousness of created natures capable of self-consciousness is naturally at once a consciousness of their dependence on God, and a consciousness of their duty to allow themselves to be determined by the will of God, and consciousness of the general purport of that will." [6]

Wuttke says, "As the conscience is a revelation of the moral law as the divine will, hence it never exists without a God-consciousness,—it is itself, in fact,

4 "The Intuitions of the Mind," pp. 419, 420.
5 "Modern Doubt and Christian Belief," p 83.
6 "Biblical Psychology," p. 165.

one of the phases of this consciousness, and is, *per se*, of a religious character, and is inexplicable from the mere world-consciousness." [7]

President Killen, of Belfast, says, "The feeling of accountability—to be found in every human being—implies the oversight of a God to whom we are responsible. When conscience tells us that there are certain things which we ought to do, and that there are certain other things which we ought not to do, it plainly suggests that there is a divine law to which we should conform, and that we are under the rule of a holy Being who rewards obedience and punishes transgression." [8]

The following is from the same Review and by Dr. Lyman H. Atwater: "Rightly understood, laws inscribed on external nature, written on the heart of man, and revealed in the Word of God, must harmonize. They are all from the same infallible author. However they may differ, so far as they relate to diverse objects, they are at one, and utter one voice when they relate to the same things. Any seeming contrariety must arise from misconceptions of, or false inferences from one or more of them. There can, therefore, be no real antagonism between the normal conscience or law graven on the heart and that written in the Revealed Word, however greatly the latter may outreach and surpass the former." In speaking of the scope of the *judicium contradictionis*, Dr. Atwater says, "Nothing is to be accepted as the Word of God which contradicts any other unquestionable truth of sense, reason, or conscience. . . . . So what clearly

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7 "Christian Ethics." Vol. II., p. 100.

8 "Princeton Review," Jan., 1879, p. 3.

contradicts our indubitable moral intuitions, as that we should do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with our God, can not be recognized as from him." [9]

Prebendary C. A. Row, of London, has admirably said, "The Being who has formed man's moral nature must possess in himself all the elements of that nature; otherwise the principle of self-determination must have originated in something destitute of it, freedom in necessity, personality in impersonality, and the power of moral choice in necessary sequence. Hence, God must be a Being who is capable of self-determination, must be a Person: in a word, must possess all those attributes which distinguish a moral from a necessary agent. Consequently, in all these respects our moral nature is a revelation of God." [1]

Doubtless these extracts are sufficient to show the trend of modern Christian thought on this subject. Consequently the affirmations of Calvanism concerning the existence of sin are emphatically contradicted by the postulates of man's moral nature. Of any given sin, remorse says, this ought not to have been committed. The ought of conscience imperatively demands the performance of the right, and thus cuts off the possibility of sin. The moral nature is the voice of God, and hence he can not desire the existence of sin to its non-existence for the sake of manifesting his glory. [2]

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9 Art. "Supremacy of Conscience and of Revelation," pp. 671, 685.

1 "Princeton Review." May, 1878, p. 721.

2 "If there be any philosophy, so called, whether physical or metaphysical, which clashes with what men in their hearts and consciences know to be true—with what the soul testifies to be the truth—so much the worse for such a philosophy."—*Dr. George P. Fisher.*

## CHAPTER III.

### Calvinism an Ally of Universalism.

"Some men would make sin a very light thing, and so count all teaching of everlasting punishment a monstrous error, wholly incongruous with our ideas of a just God. Others would make God the author of everything, sin included, and therefore responsible for all sin's enormity, and hence the everlasting punishment of man an outrage on justice. God's revealed word strikes away the foundations of both these philosophic theories. It declares sin to be rebellion against the Holy Ruler of the Universe. . . . . It further teaches that God in no sense whatever is the author of sin, that he never decreed it or encouraged it or connived at it. . . . . This world of mankind is not a machine made to go as it does by God's decrees. It is a world of independent wills, made independent in the likeness of God at the creation. . . . . To say that all this was pre-arranged and effected by God himself is to say that his word is all a sham, and that his expostulations with the wicked are all gross hypocrisy. God declares that he wishes all men to come to repentance. What does this mean, if it does not mean that God both has no hand whatever in their sin, and also has offered his grace to all as far as he consistently could?"—*Rev. Howard Crosby, D. D.*

## CHAPTER III.

### Calvinism an Ally of Universalism.

In making this affirmation I do not mean that Calvinism and Universalism have been, or now are bosom friends. By no means. The advocates of these respective systems of theology have not dwelt together in unity, nor have they loved one another as did David and Jonathan. In not a few instances the affirmations of Calvinism have constituted the negations of Universalism. The literature of the last hundred years is permeated with the protracted and intensely bitter controversies of these rival systems.

My meaning is this. In constructing a theodicy, Universalism has adopted some of the fundamental postulates of Calvinism. To a certain extent the premises of both theologies are the same, while they fundamentally disagree in their conclusions. Universalism has flourished, partly because of the utterances of Calvinism. If the Calvinistic doctrine of omnipotence be true, Universalism is the legitimate conclusion.

But it is my profound conviction that both systems are wrong: that the truth is to be found not by denying the sincere and atoning love of God for all his children, as does Calvinism; nor by limiting the divine penalties and psychological tendencies of sin, as does Universalism; but by combining these moment-

ous truths maintain, as does the Bible, that the lost are those who will not be saved.[1]

SECTION I.

*Calvinism and Universalism agree concerning God's Power.*

At this stage of the discussion it is not necessary to repeat the assertions of Calvinism relating to the Divine Omnipotence. The reader is now in possession of such facts as will enable him to form an independent judgment concerning the teachings of Calvinism. If, however, he should fail in any given case to see the close similarity between Universalism and the Theology of the Reformation, a brief reference to previous pages will doubtless be sufficient.

(1) "God, almighty in his power over mind as well as matter." This is the language of Rev. Thomas Baldwin Thayer, whose work on the "Theology of Universalism" is generally regarded as among the best which the denomination has produced. Concerning this subject the author says, "It is important to observe the language of this statement—that God is omnipotent, not only in the natural world, but also in the moral and spiritual world. It is as easy for him to create and govern a soul, as to create and govern a sun or a planet. And it requires no more effort on his part to discipline and save a moral being, ac-

[1] In this connection I would say to the Universalist reader that in writing the above I am not unmindful of the latest and ablest biblical and psychological arguments by which his doctrine is supported. As my purpose is to demonstrate the fallacies of Calvinism, I can not fully discuss the merits of Universalism. That has been done by several recent works; *e. g.*, Haley's "The Hereafter of Sin," and Wright's "The Relation of Death to Probation."

cording to the laws of his moral nature, than it requires to control the solar systems, according to the material laws impressed upon them at the time of their creation." [2]

Dr. I. D. Williamson says, "As to the attributes of God, there is a like unity of opinion. All agree that God is a being of infinite power, wisdom and goodness. No error can enter into his arrangements, no lack of goodness can mar his purposes, no failure can defeat him. Take these simple ideas of God, about which there neither is nor can be any dispute among Christians, and see what they teach in reason, in regard to the subject of destiny."

Mr. Skinner, in "Universalism Illustrated and Defined," says, "The will of God is absolute. The will of kings is absolute; and God is the King of kings and Lord of lords. He does all things after the counsel of his own will." Hosea Ballou taught that "It is not casting any disagreeable reflections on the Almighty to say he determined all things for good; and to believe that he superintends all the affairs of the universe, not excepting sin, is a million times more to the honor of God than to believe he can not, or he does not when he can." Mr. Whittemore says, "Man can not do what his Maker wills he shall not do, and he can not leave undone what his Maker wills he shall do." [4]

(2) The following quotations from eminent Calvinists are used by Dr. Thayer as supports to his doc-

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[2] p. 41.

[3] "The Philosophy of Universalism." 1866, p. 11.

[4] From "Universalism Not of the Bible," by Rev. D. N. George. pp. 309, 214, 215.

trine : he says, " Dr. Woods has a good thing on this point, which deserves a place here ; " this is the doctrine as explained by Dr. Woods. " No one can have any power except what God gives, and there can be no greater absurdity than to suppose that God will give to any of his creatures a power which he can not control, and which shall in any possible circumstances, so come in the way of his administration as actually to prevent him from doing what he wills to do. If he is really omnipotent, and if all power in creation depends on him, it must be that he will do all his pleasure ; that whatever he sees on the whole to be the best he will certainly accomplish."

Dr. Thayer takes the following from Prof. Moses Stuart, who is speaking of those who limit the power of God : " They overlook the omnipotence of that Spirit, whose office it is to bow the stubborn will, and soften the hearts of the unbelieving. What ! are not all things possible with God ? Can he not ' make the people willing in the day of his power ? ' [5] Can not he who works in men, ' according to the working of his mighty power which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead,' can he not make the deaf to hear, and the blind to see ? Can he not raise the dead to life ? Has he not promised to do all this ? Has he not often repeated the assurance that he will do it ? Has he not done it in numberless instances ? Are not ' all hearts in his hand,' and so in it that he

[5] This text—Ps. cx. 3—has been pressed into the Calvinistic service quite long enough. It does not teach the doctrine. Dr. T. W. Chambers, a pronounced Calvinist, says the sentiment is true and pleasing, but is not the meaning of the words. " They refer not to the matter or agency of conversion, but the cheerful obedience which the subjects of the priest-king renders to his commands." " Homiletic Monthly." Vol. VI., p. 648. See also Cowles on " Psalms." " Methodist Quarterly Review." 1873, p. 341.

can turn them whithersoever he will, even as the rivers of water are turned? Can any resist God's will?"

The following from Dr. Enoch Pond is regarded by Dr. Thayer as "conclusive on the point." "The question, therefore, comes to this, Is it impossible for God to convert and save all men? But in what sense can this be considered as impossible? Is it inconsistent with the nature of the human mind, and with the freedom and accountability of man? Such a supposition is *a priori* incredible; because God made the minds of men as well as their bodies—made them free, accountable agents—and it is not likely that he would give existence to a being which it was impossible for him to control. Besides is it not a fact that God does control the minds of men, of all men, in perfect consistency with their freedom and accountability? I speak not now of the manner in which this is done, whether by a direct efficiency in view of motives, or by the mere influence of motives; the fact it is done will not be denied, except by those who deny that God executes his purposes and governs the world. The Scriptures, too, by necessary implication, by direct assertion, and in almost every form of representation and expression exhibit the free minds of men as subject to the control of him who ruleth all. God's control over the free, responsible mind is also exhibited in every instance of conversion. Every conversion which takes place is the work of God's Spirit, accomplished in perfect consistency with the nature of the mind, and without any infringement of human freedom or accountability. But are not all minds constituted essentially alike? And if it is pos-

sible for God to convert one sinner in the manner above described, why not two? why not as many as he pleases? why not all?" [6]

## SECTION II.

### *Calvinism and Universalism Substantially Agree Concerning the Good Uses of Sin and the Denial of Freedom.*

Dr. Thayer says, "If there had been no error or sin in the world, we should have known nothing of Jesus the Christ, that loftiest exhibition of perfected humanity, that single bright star in the mingled firmament of earth and heaven, whose light was never dimmed. . . . . And of God, also, if there were no sin, we should lose sight of half the glory of his character, and of the beautiful and tender relations which he sustains to us." Our author also quotes from President Edwards to the effect that, all things considered, it is best that sin should exist. [7]

Ballou taught that "What in a limited sense we may justly call sin or evil, in an unlimited sense is justly called good." [8] Concerning human freedom he says, "It is evident that will or choice has no possible liberty." According to Mr. Rogers "The notion of freewill is a chimera." In speaking of God's will, Mr. Skinner says, "He does all things after the counsel of his own will. Of course when he made

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[6] Dr. Thayer also quotes an extract from a sermon by Wesley, which upon the surface seems to agree with the above. Every Arminian knows that the meaning of Wesley must have been radically different from that of Woods, Stuart and Pond. See "Methodist Quarterly Review," 1872, pp. 644, 645.

[7] Pages 52, 56, 57, 25, 20.

[8] "Christian Spectator," 1833, p. 280.

man and gave him the power which he possesses, he did everything according to his own will. It will avail nothing to say man is a moral agent; for why should God give him an agency which would defeat his own will? This would be planning against himself. Nothing is more evident than that an expected result of a voluntary act proves that it was desired." [9]

Speaking of sorrow and affliction which are in the world, Dr. Williamson says, "But these have their mission, and become, in their turn, the occasions and the sources of our highest and most refined enjoyments. Such a thing as evil for its own sake, evil not counterbalanced with corresponding good, there is not in this world, nor is there the remotest probability that there will be in the future." [1]

These extracts will suffice to show the exact position of Universalism concerning the omnipotence of God, the means of sin for the manifestation of his glory, and the doctrine of necessity in human actions. "Thus the sinful actions of men, being only the legitimate effect of causes which proceed from the author of all good, are not, as has so often been supposed, an evil of incalculable malignity; they are only a seeming evil; they are evil only to our limited and darkened understandings: they are evil only to those who can not trace out all the tendencies of things, or foresee their final issue." [2]

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9 "Universalism Not of the Bible," pp. 214, 309.

1 "The Philosophy of Universalism," p. 39.

2 "Christian Spectator," 1833, p. 279. An admirable expose of both systems under discussion.

SECTION III.

*To a Large Extent Universalism is a Reaction Against Calvinism.*

By this I do not mean that all Universalists were once Calvinists, nor that all Calvinists are in great danger of becoming believers in the salvation of all men. Nothing of the kind. Doubtless there have been, and now are Universalists who always opposed Calvinism. It is also quite probable that some of the advocates of universal salvation, have been more or less friendly to Arminianism. It is possible that some Arminians have accepted Universalism. Such facts I desire to recognize. I have no desire to exaggerate the defects of Calvinism, nor hide those of Arminianism.[3] My meaning is this, Universalism is the natural reaction against the doctrines of Calvinism. Nearly every important error has some truth which gives it vitality. The truth of Universalism is the Infinite Love of God for all his children. This grand, Bible doctrine has no place in Calvinism. As there taught it is not even the shadow of the truth. The divine love is limited to the "elect," while the "non-elect" who are equally deserving, are left in misery and eternally condemned for the rejection of that which God never meant they should accept.

Some men may regard this as Scripturally true, but the vast majority of mankind never have and never will believe the Bible teaches such a conception of him whose nature is declared to be Love. In not a few instances the reaction has been intense. Misgivings have often been keenly felt. Doubts have crowded

[3] Dr. H. W. Thomas of Chicago favors Restorationism

the mind. The faith of years has gradually disappeared, and, as a historic fact, he who was a strong Calvinist—not thinking to re-examine his premises—accepts Universalism. This will now be elucidated. But before showing whence many of the leaders of Universalism have come I wish to speak of the evil effects of Calvinism upon New England Congregationalism. Says the late Dr. W. W. Patton, of Howard University, "The early ministers were strong Calvinists of the type now known as Old School. They held ideas of the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity, of human inability to all good, of sovereign personal election and reprobation, of atonement for the elect alone, of the nature of the influence of the Holy Spirit, and of the entire passivity of the sinner in the new birth, which now are seldom preached among us, and are held by few if any of our theologians, even such as style themselves Calvinists. There was little in the preaching of such doctrines to promote revivals of religion, or to secure individual conversions - though the grace of God did secure these results from the accompanying gospel truth. There was much in them to provoke controversy and to secure reaction toward some antagonistic system, which, in the swing to the opposite extreme, was likely to be unevangelical. And such was the result. Rigid Calvinism caused a revulsion, which first took form as a cold unevangelical Arminianism, very different from the Arminianism of the Wesleys; then introduced the half-way covenant, and then developed into Unitarianism." [4]

John Murray is generally considered the father of

[4] "The Last Century of Congregationalism, pp. 12, 13.

American Universalism. His "Life" informs us of much concerning his parents and early training. They were Calvinists, and young Murray was taught by his father "that for any individual, not the elect of God, to say of God or to God, 'our Father' was nothing better than blasphemy." The Sabbath is described as "a day much to be dreaded in our family. . . . . the most laborious day in the week." At the age of twenty-one or two he was engaged in preaching as a Whitefieldian Methodist. Speaking of his views at this time he says, "I had connected this doctrine of election with the doctrine of final reprobation, not considering that, although the first was indubitably a Scripture doctrine, the last was not found in, nor could be supported by, revelation." Subsequently he was converted to Universalism by Rev. James Relley, of London. As an advocate of this doctrine he believed that a part of mankind were elected to be saved through Jesus Christ and to enjoy the Christian life while on earth. The rest, while they would suffer some degree of condemnation, would also finally be saved. "He retained high views of Divine sovereignty through life."

About the time that Mr. Murray arrived in this country (1770) Rev's Adam Streeter and Caleb Rich, originally of the Baptist denomination, became pronounced Universalists and preached in various parts of New England. [5]

Elhanan Winchester was originally a Calvinistic Baptist. Describing his earlier views, he says he was "one of the most consistent Calvinists on the continent, much upon the plan of Dr. Gill, whom he esteemed

[5] "Methodist Quarterly Review," 1871, p. 445.

almost as an oracle." In preaching he was very careful not to invite all men to come to Jesus, for "if provision was made only for a part, he had no warrant to call or invite the whole to come and partake." This duty he urged only on the "hungry, weary, thirsty, heavy laden, such as were without money, sensible sinners." [6]

Hosea Ballou at an early age joined a Baptist church of which his father was pastor. Walter Balfour was educated in the Scotch Church. Coming to America he became a Baptist about 1806, and in 1823 was a pronounced Universalist.

Sylvanus Cobb was early educated under the orthodox influence of New England, but he soon became an ardent advocate of the doctrine of Universalism. Dr. Joseph Huntington graduated at Yale College in 1762, and was ordained pastor of the First Congregational Church, Coventry, Conn., 1763; his work "Calvinism Improved," which was not published until after his death, advocates Universalism. [7]

## SECTION IV.

### *As Universalism becomes more Biblical, the Fundamental Doctrine of Calvinism is Denied.*

The Universalists are improving. Of late years their peculiar doctrines have not been so dogmatically taught nor their philosophical principles so strenuously maintained. [8] As the harsh features of Calvinism are

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6 "Christian Spectator," 1833, p. 277. For a description of Gill's Calvinism, see Chap. IV. of Part II.

7 See Note III. at close of this Chapter.

8 "We feel confident that the last twenty years have witnessed a great improvement in the devotional aspects of Universalism."—Rev. G. W. Whitney." "Universalist Quarterly," 1872, p. 323.

disappearing, there is a gradual abandonment of the coarse statements of Universalism. Hence, I shall try to show that Universalism abandons its distinctive tenet—thereby becoming more Scriptural—in the proportion as it renounces the fundamental principle of Calvinism, the Divine Omnipotence as the prime factor in the world's salvation. For the following extracts I am indebted to "The Latest Word of Universalism" which contains thirteen sermons by as many representative Universalist clergymen. I have been much pleased with its spirit of candor toward opponents and its reverent treatment of the Scriptures. Dr. A. G. Gaines writes of "The Divine Nature and Procedure." Speaking of God's relation to sin, he says, "Again, we infer from what we know of God's holiness, and of his moral government, and of the law written in the consciences of men, that he hates sin and can have no concord with it, or with the works it prompts. . . . . God never planned it, nor did he ever purpose aught that required sin as a means for its accomplishment, or that depended on sin as a means to its end. Sin is of God in no proper sense. His whole relation to it, and action towards it, is, and ever has been antagonism, resistance. . . . . God is hostile to sin; he has no purposes to serve by it; never gave his consent to it; forbade it at the first, and has steadfastly resisted it ever since; and he has assured us that he can never acce t it, nor become reconciled to it."[9]

Speaking of "Sin and its Sequences" Dr. G. H. Emerson says, ". . . . remorse recognizes a responsibility that can not attach to man: it is the proclama-

[9] Pages 20, 21.

tion of the will of a Higher Being, and it seems the literalness of truth to say it is the expression of God's censure." [1]

The following is from "Jesus and the Gospel" by Rev. J. Smith Dodge, Jr.: "But sin is man's specialty; and it is so because man alone has self-determining power. . . . Man alone can choose, and therefore he alone can resist. But when we examine why man, having the power to choose, sets his will against the will of God (which is the essence of sin), the inquiry takes us into unsound depths." [2]

Elucidating the nature of "Repentance, Forgiveness, Salvation," Rev. E. C. Sweetser says, "We must work with God, in order that God may work with us. As to his part of the process, there is no room for uncertainty. His grace is unfailing. Where sin abounds, his infinite love much more abounds; and whenever we choose to avail ourselves of it, we shall find it sufficient for our needs. He yearns over us with an infinite longing for our salvation, and will not be satisfied till the whole human family is perfected and glorified. . . . So, although his power to save us is contingent upon our voluntary obedience to the conditions of salvation, yet in view of all the facts in the case, we can not reasonably doubt that his purpose concerning us will at last be fulfilled." [3]

The following from "This Life and the Next," by Rev. J. C. Adams, is an admirable presentation of the question under consideration. "If the resistance of the will to the eternal moral law alienates the heart

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1 Pages 59, 60.

2 p. 79.

3 Pages 111, 112.

from God up to and beyond the gates of Death, the eternal laws of moral compensation will inflict suffering as long as this alienation lasts. Until the will consents to the divine order, there is no deliverance from the thralldom of retribution. So that if any soul goes into the future unrepentant, we must believe that the progress of penalty and discipline goes on, at the same time that grace persuades and love invites, until the evil heart is overcome." [4]

The Philosophy of Universalism is expounded by President E. H. Capen, who declares that man "is God's child, and that he has broken God's law. If he sins repeatedly, he will be punished repeatedly. No amount of penalty can destroy his freedom. He may choose to sin as long as he is willing to take sin and penalty together. But, whenever he shall be moved to a different choice, the way will be open. . . . We hold that the sovereignty of God will be completely vindicated in the ultimate harmony of the moral universe. . . . It will not do to say that man's freedom may defeat the beneficent intentions of the Almighty; for that would be a poor sort of freedom which practically dooms men to endless sin. . . . Of moral evil, he says, "We not only believe in the 'exceeding sinfulness of sin,' but our nature revolts at it; we loathe it; we feel bound to make war upon it, to wrestle with it, and to seek its extermination in ourselves and others. We hate it, however, not merely because it is inherently hateful, but because God hates it, because it is opposed alike by his law and his nature, of which his law is the expression." [5]

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[4] p. 165.

[5] Pages 253, 254, 265, 266.

Rev. George Hill says, "All things are possible to God within the limits of possibility. Man as such must have the attributes of his own nature, else he is not man, and no question of moral evil could arise. Within his sphere he is free and the arbiter of his joys and sorrows. All the evil in the moral universe had its birth in the heart of man. We can not say that God permits or fosters it for a good purpose for there is no good in it. We can only say that God hates it, and opposes it, and would prevent it if he could without destroying the moral freedom of man."

Dr. A. J. Patterson says of man's present condition, "God does not take pleasure in his falls and bruises, physical or moral. These are incidental to his undeveloped and imperfect state. . . . To have made a race of beings that could not sin, would have peopled the earth with beings entirely unlike ourselves. . . . He might have created beings that could not sin, but they would not be men." [6]

Dr. Miner says, "It is said, 'God can not save man against his will.' It is equally true that God can not damn man against his will. Salvation is a condition in which human powers co-operate with divine grace. The saving of man, therefore, is the bringing of his powers into such co-operation. The only thing that makes salvation necessary is perversity of will. To remove this perversity is to save." [7]

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[6] "Universalist Quarterly." 1878, 1880, pp. 53, 54, 282, 284, 444.

[7] "Bib. Sacra," 1883, p. 498. The distinction is radical. Calvinism says Man has no power to resist God. This phase of Universalism affirms the power—carries it far into eternity—but postulates the final triumph of Divine Love. But I can not so interpret the teachings of Reason and Revelation.

NOTE III.

Possibly the reader is conservative. Notwithstanding the many facts adduced to show that Calvinism has greatly aided Universalism, he may object to my reasoning and affirm that I am forcing an issue. It is, therefore, eminently proper to adduce a few additional facts illustrating how the subject is considered by those whose ability and candor can not be questioned. The following is from Dr. Fitch of New Haven fame, forming a part of his celebrated "Review of Fisk on Predestination and Election." Although somewhat long, it is too good to be abridged. ". . . . The Universalist does not (if we rightly judge) derive his doctrine in the first place from the oracles of God, but rather from the attributes of God. The argument on which he relies as the real basis of his faith is the following: God, as infinitely benevolent, must be disposed to prevent sin with all its evils. God as omnipotent, can prevent sin in all his moral creatures; God therefore will hereafter prevent all sin; and thus render all his creatures happy forever.

"The infidel reasons exactly in the same manner, and comes to the same conclusion. But, then, he has discernment enough to see that the Scriptures contain the doctrine of future endless punishment. He, therefore, discards the divine origin of the book, as inculcating a doctrine so obviously false, and inconsistent with the perfections of God.

"As a specimen of atheistical reasoning on this subject, a friend has put into our hands a card engraved in an attractive style, and said to have been printed in New York, and extensively circulated by a club of

atheists in that city. It contains the following words, 'God either wills that evil should exist, or he does not. If he wills the existence of evil, where is his Goodness? If evil exists against his will, how can he be All-Powerful? And if God is both good and omnipotent, where is evil? Who can answer this?'

"Now it is manifest, that these several conclusions of the universalist, the infidel and the atheist, are all derived from substantially the same premises. If the premises are admitted to be true, the conclusion follows with all the force of absolute demonstration. The premises are briefly, that the permanent existence of evil is inconsistent with the goodness and the power of God. Hence the atheist infers, in view of existing evil and the want of evidence that it will ever end, that there is no omnipotent, benevolent being—there is no God. The universalist and the infidel maintain the eternal existence of evil to be inconsistent with the perfections of God, and hence infer that ultimately all evil will be excluded from the system; the one explaining away the plainest declarations of the Bible, and the other denying the divine origin of the book.

"Here, then, the advocate of truth is bound to show that there is a fallacy in these premises. Where then does the fallacy lie? The premises rest on two attributes of God, his power and his benevolence. As to his power, the argument assumes that God can, by his omnipotence, exclude sin, and its consequent suffering, from a moral system. Those who admit this assumption have therefore no plea left for the divine benevolence, except to assert that 'sin is the necessary means of the greatest good,' and that for this rea-

son, it is introduced into our system, and will always be continued there, by a Being of infinite benevolence. But can this be proved? Is this supposition consistent with the sincerity of God as a lawgiver, the excellence of his law, the known nature and tendency of sin and holiness, and the unqualified declarations of the divine word, that 'sin is the abominable thing which his soul hateth,' that he 'would have all men be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth,' etc. Can this be consistent with his actually preferring the existence of all the sin in the system to holiness in its stead? For ourselves, we must say, that we regard the success of any attempt to make men believe this, as utterly and forever hopeless. Our confident anticipation is, that universalism, infidelity and atheism in this land and through the world, will only go on to new triumphs, so long as their overthrow is left to depend on the truth of the position, that God prefers sin to holiness, in any of his moral creatures.

"We are thrown back then to consider the other branch of this argument, viz., the assumption that God as omnipotent can prevent *all* moral evil in a moral system. Is not here the fallacy? We know that a moral system necessarily implies the existence of free agents, with the power to sin in despite of all opposing power. This fact sets human reason at defiance in every attempt to prove that some of these agents will not use that power and actually sin. There is, at least, a possible contradiction involved in the denial of this: and it is no part of the prerogative of omnipotence to be able to accomplish contradictions. But if it be not inconsistent with the true idea of omnipotence, to suppose that God can not prevent all sin

in a moral system, then neither is it inconsistent with his goodness that he does not prevent it; since sin in respect to his power of prevention, may be incidental to the existence of that system which infinite goodness demands. It is, then, in view of this groundless assumption, concerning omnipotence, that we see the reasoning of the universalist, the infidel and the atheist, to be the merest paralogism, or begging of the question. The utter impossibility of proving their main principle, is so obvious that they *can* be made to see it, and we hope, to acknowledge it. At any rate, until this mode of refutation be adopted, we despair of the subversion of their cause by reasoning. By that mode of argument, which assumes that God prefers sin to holiness, the main pillar of their conclusion, viz., that God can prevent all moral evil in a moral system, is conceded to them, and thus they are only confirmed in their delusions.

"When shall the defenders of the truth learn the difference between scriptural doctrines and groundless theories? When will they see, that a zeal for the one, leads them to attach truth to the other, and thus inadvertently to prepare the way for the worst of errors?"[1]

Speaking of the popular doubts concerning the doctrine of future endless punishment, Dr. John P. Gulliver, of Andover Seminary says, "What then is the practical lesson which such facts as these teach us? It is plainly that if we expect men, especially unconverted men, if even we expect a large class of the best minds among Christian men, to accept the clear teachings of the Bible on this subject, 'without defalcation or fraud,' as the lawyers say, we must go

[1] "Christian Spectator." 1831, pp. 616, 617.

back of their faith in the words of the Bible, and plant our doctrine in the deep soil of their original moral convictions—in their sense of justice, in their love of law, in their intuitions of right; in their perceptions of the absolute and unchangeable necessities of moral government, in their knowledge of the nature of free, moral agency, in their comprehensive views of God's plans in permitting and removing sin and suffering. Till this is done, the utmost which all appeals to the strong language of the Bible can accomplish, will be to produce a kind of distressing bewilderment, and the highest expression of faith will be—'I do not understand it. It is a dark and horrible mystery.' . . . .

"But the influence of this confusion of thought is, of course, much more positive upon minds which have never experienced the grace of God. They have no counteracting testimony coming from the daily communion of the heart with a loving Father. They take the epicurean dilemma. 'God either would have prevented evil andcould not—then where is his power? or he could have prevented evil and would not—then where is his benevolence?' And they conclude from it that there is no God, or that there is no evil but the necessary means of good, and that final good is to be educed from all evil. In other words, they either become Atheists, denying the infinity of God, or Universalists, denying the eternity of evil. Of the two, it is easy to see that the Atheist occupies the only tenable ground. For he who affirms that God can not secure the highest final good without using evil as its temporary *means*, limits his power just as truly as he who affirms that he can not secure the highest good

without permitting evil as its necessary *concomitant*. The fact that the means are *temporary*, while the concomitant is eternal, does not change the fact that, in both cases, God has been proved unable to secure good without any admixture of evil: hence, according to the epicurean premise, he is not omnipotent; hence, there is no God.

"With these facts before us, we can not wonder if a large class of minds refuse to accept the Christian's faith, if it must be accompanied with the theologian's doubts; and have sought most eagerly for some position in thought which should not array the moral nature which God has given them in hostility against God himself.

"All these attempts must, as a matter of course, have, as a common element, the placing of some limitation of some kind upon God's *power to prevent sin*. There is no possible escape from the epicurean dilemma unless we assume that the absolute prevention of sin by an act of power in a being free to sin, is a contradiction in terms—is an impossibility; that such prevention is outside the range and domain of power, as much so as the requirement to construct a circle from right angles would be. The whole strength of skepticism, in all its forms and degrees, consists in slipping in somewhere, in its reasoning, the absurd assumption that God can necessitate the choice of a being endowed with freedom to choose uncontrolled by necessity.

"On the other hand, the whole force of any argument of Christian philosophy, in vindication of the present moral order of the universe, will be ultimately found in the axiom that omnipotence consists simply

in the power to do whatever is in its nature possible, not what is impossible. In other words, there is in the whole argument the assumption that God is only bound to prevent all the evil he can, and yet create a system which, on the whole, will produce more good than any other. If a system containing evil, is seen to be better in its total results of holiness and happiness, than any system of a lower grade which excludes evil, then God is vindicated. But on no other hypothesis can such a vindication be made. . . . . The fault must be in our human philosophy, not in the Divine theology. When we have learned to give a proper definition to *power*, and do not demand of Omnipotence the performance of *impossibilities;* when we have learned otherwise, to discriminate between things that differ, when we have learned to discard prejudice, and to subject all our early theological notions, and our habitual definitions of words, and our stereotyped modes of thought to the test of reason and conscience, and the teaching of God, the church will, for the first time in her history, look forth upon an unbelieving, unconvicted, rebellious world, 'fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.'"[2]

The following by Dr. George P. Fisher is an admirable presentation of the historic fact that Calvinism has prepared the way for Universalism:

"Strict Calvinism was a symmetrical and coherent system. It was constructed from the theological point of view. The starting point was God and his eternal purpose. The end was made to be the manifestation of his love and his justice, conceived of as co-ordinate. The salvation of some, and the condemnation of others,

[2] An Introductory Essay in "Law and Penalty Endless," pp. 14–17, 23.

are the means to this end. The motive of redemption is love to the elect, for whom all the arrangements of Providence and grace are ordered. The capstone was placed upon the system by the supralapsarians, who followed Calvin's strong language in the 'Institutes' (but not elsewhere, especially not in his Commentaries), and made the fall and sin of mankind—like creation itself, the object of an efficient decree—means to the one supreme End; for if mercy and righteousness are to be exerted in the salvation and condemnation of sinners, a world of sinners must first exist.

"There was rebellion against this system. Not to speak of the different theology of the Lutherans—in the French Calvinistic school of Saumur, wherever Arminianism prevailed, in the modified Calvinism of the New England churches, it was asserted that in the 'intention of love,' Christ died for all, that God's love extends over all, in the sense that he desires them to be saved, yearns toward them, and offers them help.

"This mode of thought has more affinity to the Greek anthropology than has rigid Calvinism, or its Augustinian prototype. The teleological point of view is less prominent; it stands in the background. The universal love and pity of God, the broad design of the atonement, are the central points.

"The more rigid Calvinism often protested against this modification of the system: it considered the whole theodicy imperiled by it; it saw in it a drift and tendency towards other innovations subversive of the system. For if this universal, yearning love is at the basis of redemption, will it not be suggested that this love will not fail of its end? Will the heart of God be disappointed of its object? Will the Almighty

be baffled by the creaturely will? If Christ died for all, will he be 'satisfied' with anything short of the recovery of all?

"As a matter of historical fact, belief in Restoration and kindred doctrines are seen to spring, in different quarters, in the wake of the mitigated form of theology to which we have referred. Not that such beliefs are logically required. All *a priori* reasoning must be subject to the correction of experience. There is a terrible reign of sin, though all sin is contrary to the will of God; there is a development of sinful character, a hardening of the heart, a persistent resistance—'*how often* would *I* . . . . but *ye* would not'; 'woe unto thee, Chorazin, woe unto thee, Bethsaida:' there is a stern, tragic side to nature and to human life. We stand within a sphere where results are not worked out by dint of power, but where freedom, under moral law, with all the peril, as well as possibility of good, which freedom involves, is an essential attribute of our being."[3] The "Andover Controversy" is another link in this historic chain. Dr. E. A. Park has demonstrated that according to the intent of the founders of Andover Theological Seminary its funds must be used to promulgate Calvinistic doctrine.[4] The tendency of the "New Departure" is certainly toward Universalism.

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[3] "New Englander," 1878. Art. "The Doctrine of Future Punishment," pp. 192, 193.

[4] "The Associate Creed of Andover Theological Seminary."

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